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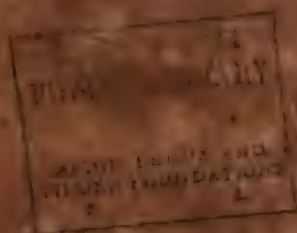
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Home





GEORGE III

VOL. I.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
REIGN OF GEORGE III.

TO THE
TERMINATION OF THE LATE WAR.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
A VIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLAND,
IN PROSPERITY AND STRENGTH, TO THE
ACCESSION OF HIS MAJESTY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY ROBERT BISSET, LL. D.
AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE OF BURKE," &c. &c.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. I.

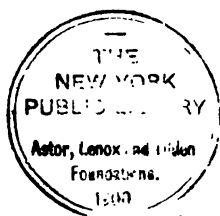
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PREFACE.

TO enlarge on the magnitude of the subject on which I have adventured to write, would be unnecessary, and might be unwise. Every reader must know, that the era is eventful and interesting : an expatiation, therefore, on the greatness and importance of the theme, would only manifest the imprudence of the choice, should the execution prove inadequate. I am fully aware, that many votaries of historical literature deem it more difficult to write a history of present times, than of remote transactions : experience, however, does not confirm the opinion, as some of the most authentic and impartial works have recorded events which passed during the lives of the authors. Citation of instances would be superfluous, both to classical and modern readers. The writer who is competent to the task of composing a history, may execute the work on a cotemporary subject, as easily as on any other. The peculiar difficulty belonging to a performance of this kind, is to avoid prejudice and partiality ; yet it is no more impracticable for an historian to deliver the truth respecting living characters, than for a witness to deliver faithful testimony according to the best of his knowledge. An ardent partisan of any of the great political leaders, might find it impossible to render impartial justice in a narrative which includes their conduct ; but a

writer that is totally unconnected with the parties, has no motive to distort truth for the sake of either the one or the other. I conceive, therefore, that no valid objection can lie against the choice of the theme, except such as may refer to the competence of the author. On this subject it would ill become me to speak ; in a few words, however, I shall mention the reasons which determined me to engage in the present undertaking, hoping they may serve as an apology to those who may think that I have made an essay beyond my strength. Having devoted the chief part of my literary attention to biographical and historical studies I conceived an idea many years ago of writing a history, choosing for my subject the transactions and events with which I was chiefly conversant, and by which I was most deeply interested and impressed. Britain, from the revolution to the present time, appeared to me to afford a scope for narration and reflection, equal to any that had hitherto been treated in history ; and I cherished a hope of being able, some time or other, to complete a narrative of that period.

COMMENCING literary adventure with more moderate pursuits, progressive encouragement emboldened me to attempt the Life of Burke. The subject naturally called my attention to more recent transactions and events than those which I had originally proposed *first* to narrate ; and with proud pleasure I contemplated the efforts of my country, displaying in arduous struggles the exhaustless abundance of British resources, and the invincible force of the British character ; still more strikingly manifested in the times in which I live, than even those which had immediately or shortly preceded.

THE reception which that work met from the public, and from all the reviewers at the time, of whatever party or political sentiments, inspired me with hopes

that I might be enabled to execute a work not uninteresting or unimportant to others, on a subject the examination of which was so pleasing and instructive to myself. Other gentlemen, I was aware, had handled the same period ; but, without discussing the literary merits of either Messrs. Macfarlane or Belsham, I readily saw, and knew the world believed, that both these gentlemen were rather repeaters of party notions and reports, than original composers of authentic and impartial history ; the ground, therefore, did not appear to me to be pre-occupied.

For materials, besides examining all the periodical and occasional narratives of the times, I carefully investigated state papers, and many other written documents, with which I had been liberally furnished by private communication. For political, commercial, naval, and military information, I applied to men who were most conversant in these subjects, and fortunately never applied in vain. By conversation with intelligent and experienced gentlemen both in the land and sea service, I acquired as much knowledge of their respective professions, as enabled me to comprehend the general tactics and discipline, their progressive improvements, and actual state ; and thus, in every particular action, to trace the cause and operation whence the event resulted. The financial history and situation of the country, I studied in the most approved works ; and in official documents, for access to which I am indebted to the private friendship of a member of the legislature. Where my subject required legal investigation, in addition to reading, I had recourse to eminent counselors ; and to a gentleman, who is now about to leave a country adorned by his genius and erudition, I am peculiarly indebted for many of the ideas that will be found in the parting view of lord Mansfield. In short, on

every topic that required either narrative or discussion, I have consulted the most authentic evidence, and the best approved judges.

IN the disposition of my materials, I have adopted the following plan. Previous to the commencement of the History, there is an Introduction, which traces the progressive improvements of England, in internal prosperity and strength, as well as in estimation and importance among foreign powers, from the earliest times to the beginning of the war 1756. A preliminary chapter contains the causes and outline of hostilities, with the internal transactions and state of the country during the last years of the late king ; in order that the reader, having before him at the accession of his present majesty, the outset of national affairs, foreign and domestic, may more easily perceive progression and result. Both in the Introduction and History, it has been my endeavour to place in a just and striking light the force of the British character, formed and invigorated by the British constitution ; and to demonstrate that Britain, either in peace or in war, prospers and conquers, because she excels in wisdom and virtue. This is the moral lesson which my narrative attempts to inculcate ; and if I do not succeed, the deficiency is in myself, and not in my subject. It is possible that my narrative may be charged with national partiality : I confess I love my country, and hate her enemies ; and if this be a crime, I must plead guilty. I trust, however, that notwithstanding my warm affection for Britain, and my admiration of her stupendous efforts, I shall be found, even in reciting the contests with her foes, to have rigidly adhered to historical truth, and done justice to the exertions of her enemies ; who, in disciplined valour, genius, and power, far surpassed any foes that were ever opposed to the heroes of ancient Greece or Rome.

It was my intention to have extended the work to the peace of Amiens ; but the recent rupture, with the official exposition of its causes, having shown that one of the parties regarded it merely as a temporary truce, the cessation of hostilities appeared to me to form a more proper epoch, than the conclusion of a treaty which the conduct of our enemy has proved to have been regarded by him as no treaty.

SUCH is the object, plan, and distribution of this present History ; and if its execution be received with equal favour as my former labours, it will answer the most sanguine expectations of the author.

INTRODUCTION.

Progressive Improvement of England—in Internal Prosperity and Strength—in Estimation and Importance among Foreign Powers.

ANCIENT writers agree, in supposing that the first inhabitants of Britain migrated from the continent. This opinion is founded on their language, manners, institutions, religion, and complexion ; in which they closely resembled the neighbouring Celts. Their governments, though monarchical, were free ; they were under the guidance of juridical superstition ; their only records were the songs of their bards. They were divided into a number of petty states, inspired with mutual jealousy, and respectively agitated by internal dissensions : but though similar to the continental Gauls in civil and religious establishments, and in general character, yet being farther removed from the centre of civilization, they were still more barbarous in their manners. Their possessions and their wants were equally limited ; they were ignorant of the refinements of life. Subsisting by the chase, by pasturage, and imperfect agriculture ; clothed with the skins of beasts which their fields and forests supplied, and dwelling in huts raised in their woods and marshes, they neither sought nor knew the pleasures of foreign luxury. In this uncultivated state, they discovered that masculine boldness and strength of character, by which their successors have been distinguished in all the stages of progressive improvement. Ready and willing to contribute whatever efforts their country might require, they spurned at com-

First inhabitants of Britain.

Effects of
the Roman
conquest.

pulsion. The commons retained a greater degree of power than among their Gallic kinsmen. Like all European barbarians warlike and ferocious, they exercised their prowess in insular contentions, without attempting to interfere in the affairs of the continent. Their military force consisted in their infantry, which wanted only discipline and skill to have opposed with effect even the Roman legions. Intestine divisions facilitated the progress of the enemy's armies under the conduct and wisdom of Agricola. Chased from the verdant and fertile fields of southern Britain, liberty sought, found, and preserved an asylum in the bleak and barren fastnesses of Caledonia. The victor, in conformity to the Roman system, having subjugated the defenders of their country, from mildness of disposition and soundness of policy endeavoured to render the chains which he had imposed easy and agreeable. He taught them the Roman language and manners, instructed them in letters and science, and inspired them with a relish for the accommodations and luxuries of polished life. That both the new acquisition, and the legions which defended it, might be secure from the northern incursions of the unconquered mountaineers, he formed a line of posts along the Scottish isthmus. Defended by these and subsequent fortifications, protected by the conqueror's forces, acquiescing willingly in the dominion of their masters, more effectually and durably subdued by their arts and their arms, the once bold, hardy, and independent Britons became the timid, effeminate, and servile subjects of the Roman empire. Detached from the continent, this province enjoyed profound tranquillity, long after the irruptions of northern barbarians had pervaded the other parts of the empire. The skilful avarice of its conquerors discovered many of the advantages of Britain; the general fertility of its soil; the richness of its pastures; the abundance of its flocks, secure from wild beasts and venomous serpents; the value of its minerals; the number and conveniences of its harbours, equally adapted to commerce and defence. From her civilized subduers, Britain first learned the powers which she possessed, and which, inspired by liberty, and enlight-

ened by knowledge, she has since carried to so unparalleled an extent.

THE progress of northern invaders at length compelled the emperors of now enervated Rome, to recal their legions from distant frontiers, that they might defend the metropolis. Valuable as Britain was, they were necessitated to evacuate that island for ever. Debilitated by long peace, and dejected by long slavery, the southern Britons had now to encounter ferocious foes, against whom the strength of Roman fortifications, and the dread of Roman discipline, had hitherto afforded them sufficient protection. The Picts and Scots, who dwelt in the northern parts beyond the wall of Antoninus, made incursions upon their peaceable and effeminate neighbours; and beside the temporary depredations which they committed, these combined nations threatened the whole province with subjection, or, what the inhabitants more dreaded, with universal plunder and devastation.^a Unable to defend themselves, the Britons applied for assistance to their late masters. A single legion sent to their succour, freed their country from its desultory invaders; and, having effected its deliverance, again returned to the continent. The Britons were once more exposed to the inroads of their impetuous neighbours. Still too little inured to war, to recover the valour of their ancestors, they again sought security from foreign protectors.

Romans
evacuate
Britain.

Picts and
Scots.

STRETCHED along the coasts of northern Germany, Saxons, and opposite to Britain, were the Saxons, one of the fiercest and most warlike tribes of their nation. Hardy and intrepid in every kind of warfare, from their maritime situation they were peculiarly addicted to nautical expeditions. Originally fishermen, they had become pirates; they possessed arms and ships, the art of navigation, and the habit of naval war. Invading and despoiling the neighbouring coasts, they had gradually extended their depredations from the German ocean to the British channel and the bay of Biscay. The Romans had been frequently successful in repelling these piratical efforts,^b but they could not prevent them from being

^a See Hume, vol. i. p. 10.

^b Gibbon, vol. iv. p. 29.

renewed with increased force. The dissolution of the Roman power encouraged the Saxons to repeat their incursions into southern Europe; they were a terror to other nations.

SUCH was the people to whom the Britons applied for aid. Hengist and Horsa, the most celebrated warriors of the time, easily persuaded their countrymen to engage in an enterprise which appeared to them to promise a favourable opportunity of displaying valour, and acquiring plunder. Preparing a considerable force, they landed in the Isle of Thanet, and immediately marched to defend the Britons from the Picts and Scots. They were speedily successful against the ravagers of southern Britain. Rescued from their enemies, the Britons now expected to enjoy tranquillity, under the protection of their warlike allies. They soon found, however, that a state cannot long enjoy independence and security, that trusts to any efforts but its own. The Saxons seeing, in the facility with which they overthrew the Picts and Scots, how easily a people could be conquered that were unable to resist such feeble invaders, soon formed the project of subjugating the Britons themselves. They were allured by the fertility, verdure, and riches of the country; and inflamed with the desire of exchanging for it, the barren, bleak, and indigent regions of uncultivated Germany. Of these advantages they informed their countrymen, and soon received reinforcements, which enabled them easily to subdue that part of the country which they had first known and attempted. The ready establishment that the Saxons acquired in Kent under Hengist and Horsa, invited other hordes to invade different parts of the island. The Britons by degrees recovered that valour^c which their ancestors had exerted against the conquerors of the world: the contest became arduous and bloody: many deeds of heroism were performed by the defenders of their liberties, as well as by ambitious aggressors. The fame of prince Arthur, though the theme of chivalrous mythology^d and poetic fiction, is allowed by our historians to have its

^c Gibbon places the courage and perseverance with which the Britons resisted the Saxons, in a more striking light than any other historian. See *History*, vol. vi. p. 385. to 393.

^d See *Don Quixote*.

foundation in truth.^e In the darkness of barbarity, as well as in the light of civilization, Britain wanted not leaders and soldiers to combat the assailants of her independence. The natives, however, were yearly decreasing in numbers, while the losses of the Saxons were supplied by recruits from the continent. After a hundred and fifty years, the Germans fully established themselves, by exterminating the ancient possessors. The Saxons, in forming their heptarchy, having extirpated the Britons, introduced into this island the manners and institutions of their native land, and effected a revolution more complete than that which conquest has usually produced.^f The elegance and refinement which had begun to spread through Britain while a Roman province, were now totally overwhelmed by barbarity.

BUT, uncouth as their manners were, the Saxons possessed vigorous understandings, undaunted courage, supported by great bodily strength, and inspired by an ardent love of liberty. Their several systems of policy, formed upon the principles of their ancestors, as consecrated to immortality by the pen of Tacitus, uniting kings, chiefs, and commons, were the rude but strong foundation of that constitution, which their descendants, inheriting the force of their character, now enjoy and preserve. When they had settled themselves beyond all question and dispute as masters of southern Britain, the Saxons soon discontinued intercourse with their German countrymen, and maintained little connexion with any foreign country. Adhering to the superstition of their forefathers, they had broken one powerful tie, by which many of the Britons were attached to christian Europe. Having, in the products of their new possession, supplies for their wants, they rarely attempted to cultivate the knowledge of other countries for the sake of commercial benefits. From their insular situation, together with the state of their continental neighbours, who were chiefly occupied in disputes with adjoining principalities, or internal arrangements, they had no hostile interference with foreign countries; neither religion, traffic, nor jarring pre-

Character
of the
Saxons.

^e Hume, vol. i. p. 21; and Gibbon, vol. vi. p. 390; with their respective authorities.

^f Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 197.

tensions, engaged them in amity, nor involved them in war, with the nations of the continent.

Small connexion with the continent, during the heptarchy.

Religion first opens a communication with southern Europe.

Saxons begin to understand the importance of naval force and of commerce.

SINCE the invasion of Julius Cæsar, Britain was never so detached from external politics, as during the first ages of the Saxon heptarchy. Religion restored the intercourse which had formerly subsisted between Britain and the continent. The conversion of the Anglo Saxons to christianity, beside the important effects which it was calculated to produce upon the morals and dispositions of its new votaries, proved the means of opening a political connexion between this island and less barbarous regions. Coincidence of theological opinion gradually introduced communications upon other subjects; the kingdoms of the heptarchy began to interest themselves in the affairs of their southern neighbours, and to conceive that a naval force was the most effectual means of defence and security to islanders. Though the internal contests between the several princes had prevented this newly discovered policy from being carried into extensive execution, yet one prince (Offa of Mercia) set the example; and, when France under Charlemagne had risen to a great pitch of power and opulence, encouraged commerce, and formed a navy, as the certain security of this country against the conquerors of the continent.⁵ Offa perceived the advantage to be derived from foreign trade being carried on by his own subjects, and for that purpose concluded a commercial treaty with the French monarch.

WHEN the heptarchy was consolidated under Egbert into the kingdom of England, circumstances became more auspicious to the commercial and political aggrandizement of the country. This revolution favoured internal trade, by putting a period to intestine wars, and rendering the communication between the several parts of England more secure and free: it was friendly to external commerce, by making the English monarchy a greater object to foreign merchants, and the English monarchs of greater consideration in foreign countries. Still the Anglo Saxons were defective in that nautical power, which their situation required, and its resources admitted.

DEPREDACTIONS committed by a new enemy, who inva- Danes
 ded the coasts, convinced the English of the necessity of
 equipping a maritime force. The Saxons, who had
 remained in Germany when their brethren established
 themselves in Britain, continued to maintain the char-
 acter, and follow the pursuits of their ancestors, being
 distinguished for naval power, and becoming, from its
 exertion in piracy, formidable to all the southern coasts.
 As they still adhered to the pagan superstition, Charle-
 magne undertook their conversion by means more agree-
 able to the violent bigotry of the benighted ages, than to
 the generosity, magnanimity, and wisdom of his own
 character. In the progress of his conquests having sub-
 dued northern Germany, by the most rigorous edicts
 against paganism he endeavoured to establish christianity,
 and severely punish the transgressors of his decrees, in
 many instances decimating the refractory.^h Some of these
 pagans complied with the imperious mandates of the con-
 queror; while others, more intrepid and independent,
 refused to yield to injunctions so cruelly enforced, and,
 to avoid the fury of the persecution, retired into the
 adjoining peninsula of Jutland. Meeting there with
 inhabitants of similar manners, institutions, and reli-
 gious faith, they easily coalesced with the ancient posses-
 sors, and having assumed a common appellation, the
 Saxons and Jutlanders, under the name of Danes, about
 the end of the eighth century, commenced a very exten-
 sive system of maritime invasion; in the course of which invade
 they were induced to visit England, at that time unpro- England.
 tected by an adequate naval force. In their inroads they
 showed that, though barbarians, they were not destitute of
 judgment or prudence. Learning that the natives were
 as valiant soldiers as themselves, they trusted chiefly to
 their skill and activity as sailors; and having previously
 explored the state of the coasts, they landed in the most
 defenceless and fertile parts; which having pillaged before
 an English force could assemble, they retired to their
 ships; and soon after descended, in a similar manner, and
 with similar success, on other parts of the coasts. These

^h Hume, vol. i. p. 57.

enterprises harassed the vigorous reign of Egbert, who had not acquired the only force by which they could have been effectually repressed. Elated with their success, and farther encouraged by the feebleness and inaction of the superstitious Ethelwolf, they enlarged their schemes, and formed the project of subduing the whole of that country, with the devastation of whose coasts they had hitherto been contented. During the reign of this weak prince and his elder sons, the Danes made rapid strides to the attainment of their object; when the genius and wisdom of his youngest son, Alfred, not only extricated his country from present danger, but established the most effectual means of future security and aggrandizement to the kingdom.

Alfred discerns that the security and aggrandizement of England must arise from her navy.

HAVING restored his country from a state of humiliation and subjection, to honour, independence, and glory, the illustrious Alfred turned his philosophic mind to a comprehensive survey of its situation and circumstances, and its relation to foreign powers. He saw that the safety and greatness of England must chiefly depend upon maritime effort. To promote trade, and to establish a navy, after the expulsion of the Danes, was a principal object of his renowned administration. For the attainment of these purposes, as well as to gratify the inquisitive spirit incident to genius, he cultivated an intercourse with foreign and even remote countries. His agents not only explored the shores of the Baltic and the White Sea, but investigated the state of Asia, from the Mediterranean to the Persian and Arabian Gulf. He introduced new manufactures, which furnished many articles for exportation, as well as for consumption within the kingdom. By his inventive talents, he made great improvements in the art of shipbuilding. The vessels constructed under his direction, were much superior to any that were known in the northern or western seas, in the three important qualities of celerity, force, and facility of management.ⁱ As the founder of English jurisprudence, and the establisher of internal security and tranquillity, Alfred is not more deservedly celebrated, than as the founder of Eng-

ⁱ Henry, vol. iv. p. 221.

lish navigation and commerce, and the establisher of external security and greatness. This extraordinary prince so clearly demonstrated and vigorously pursued the real interests of his country, that other Anglo Saxon kings, according to their adoption or neglect of the policy of Alfred succeeded in resisting the efforts of foreign aggressors. The abilities and vigour of the English sovereigns for several generations maintained a powerful navy, which prevented the northern plunderers from seriously infesting a country so strongly secured, and impelled them to seek pillage and settlement among our continental neighbours.

Alfred
founder of
English jurisprudence, navigation, and commerce.

THE weakness of Ethelred in the neglect and mismanagement of naval affairs, manifested in its effects the wisdom of Alfred, as clearly as it was shown in the able measures of his immediate successors; for when the system of defence, which Alfred by his precept and example inculcated, was either abandoned or feebly executed, the evils recurred, which he had so vigorously repelled and afterwards prevented. But, though the invasions of the Danes impressed the English with a high idea of the importance of commerce, it was rather with the view of affording the means of defence, than of being productive of prosperity and civilization. Export traffic, so much interrupted by northern cruisers, did not, in the time of the Saxons, rise to that magnitude which Alfred had proposed and expected. The total subjection of England to the Danes was salutary to the commerce of the kingdom, by putting an end to those bloody wars between the two nations, which had raged about forty years with little intermission. Canute the Great, a wise as well as a warlike prince, endeavoured to gain the affections of his English subjects, by affording them the most effectual protection, and every encouragement in his power. He employed the influence which his high reputation, extensive dominions, and mighty force had obtained, among foreign princes, to procure favours and privileges from them to his trading subjects. From his time, during the reign of his sons, and after the restoration of the Saxon line, the navigation and commerce of England continued comparatively flourishing till the conquest. The Danes, having betaken themselves to cultivate the arts of peace, no longer dis-

Contest
with the
maritime
depreda-
tors benefi-
cial to
England.

turbed their neighbours by piracy. By the contest with the northern navigators, the Anglo Saxons were losers in the interruption of agriculture and of internal improvement, but gainers in acquiring naval power, commercial ideas, and promoting an intercourse with the continent. From the accession of Canute, when the internal disadvantages ceased to be felt and the external advantages increased, the benefit which they now derived, exceeded the loss that they had formerly incurred. Though England, from religion, had hitherto some intercourse with southern Europe, her chief political connexion was with the north. She had very little acquaintance with her adjacent neighbours the French. The conquest of the kingdom by William of Normandy, made a most important change, both in her internal state, and in her relation to the continent.

Norman
conquest.

Affecting
the consti-
tution,
laws, and
manners of
England.

COMPLICATED as the feudal system was in its nature, and extensive in its subjects, it was extremely simple in its principle, and confined in its original objects: it was a policy, which, overlooking every other consideration, narrowed its provision to national defence;^k and was merely a reciprocal guarantee of acquisitions proceeding from conquest. The leaders and officers among the northern subduers of middle and southern Europe, in their respective tribes and divisions, entered into agreements to prevent themselves from being dispossessed of their lands by other invaders. The insulated state of the Anglo Saxons rendering them less exposed to ambitious depredators than their continental neighbours, the feudal system had not been established in England. The people had retained more of the ancient German liberty than on the continent, where an enslaving aristocracy was generally prevalent. Hence was preserved that spirit of freedom which the most aspiring monarchs could never thoroughly subdue, and which has rendered this comparatively small territory, this "little body with a mighty heart!" the admiration and terror of most extensive and powerful empires. The manners of the Saxons, though rude and unpolished, were frank, manly, and independent; totally

^k Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 13.

void of that servility and submissiveness which characterize the subjects of either monarchical or aristocratical slavery: they were barbarians, it is true, but bold and generous. The conquest of the kingdom by the Normans effected a considerable change; though by no means, like that by the Saxons, a complete revolution in laws and manners. William attempted to model his new dominions according to the feudal system, with partial, but imperfect success. The Saxon spirit of liberty continuing, extended to the Normans, with whom, in a few ages, the former inhabitants became entirely intermixed; and obtained, from the prudence of wise,¹ or extorted from the fears of weak,^m princes, the revival, and even the improvement, of the Anglo Saxon constitution. Still, however, the Norman laws and establishments subsisted in a considerable degree, and long continued to affect the condition and manners of the people.ⁿ

THE changes produced by the Norman conquest were still greater at the beginning, and eventually more permanent in other respects, than in our laws and establishments. Hence is to be dated the commencement of our intercourse with middle and southern Europe, and especially with France, which has formed so important a branch of our political history. From that growing intercourse with continental Europe, proceeded also, in the progress of time, the beginning of our commercial efforts, and the revival and extension of our naval force. From the possession of Normandy by the English princes, proceeded those wars which so long raged between France and England to their mutual detriment. The crusades at certain times, by giving them identity of object, produced alliance; but this was soon after followed by hostilities. The weakness and wickedness of John abroad as well as at home, produced most beneficial effects to his country. The murder of prince Arthur excited a war, which, terminating in the conquest of the English dominions in France, extirpated the principal cause of dissension; while the weakness of Henry III., and the wisdom and good-

Inter-
course with
continental
Europe.

Origin of
wars be-
tween
England
and
France.

¹ Henry I. and Henry II.
and Blackstone, vol. iv. c. 33.

^m John and Henry III. See Hume, vol. ii.
n Blackstone, vol. iv. c. 33. on the Rise,
Progress, and Completion of the British Constitution.

ness of Lewis IX., maintained a long peace between the respective kingdoms.

Civil and
political
objects of
Edward I.

THE lofty genius, comprehensive wisdom, and intrepid spirit of the first Edward, were chiefly occupied with two grand objects; the establishment of a perfect system of jurisprudence in England, and the consolidation of Great Britain into one kingdom. Engaged so deeply within the island, he was involved in no lasting or important hostilities with the continent. In the unfortunate reign of Edward II., the feebleness of the son in Britain, undid a great part of what the abilities of the father had effected; and with the continent he had established no material connexion. The ambition mingled with the extraordinary qualities of his celebrated son found a new ground of contest with France, which caused great disasters to both kingdoms. Unwise as the policy was which prompted Edward III. to seek the sovereignty of a kingdom in opposition to its established laws, and contrary to the interests of his own country, his measures for executing the undertaking were concerted with an ability worthy of his character. To make a powerful impression, he formed an extensive confederacy with continental states, and laid the foundation of a much wider intercourse with the Low Countries and Germany, than had ever existed before. The first important consequence resulting from Edward's alliance with the Netherlands was, that his attention was thereby directed to naval affairs. After the revival of commerce, first by the Italian states in the south, and afterwards by the Hanseatic league in the north of Europe, central position, maritime situation, fertility of soil, and industry of people, being fostered under a government of less feudal aristocracy and more enlarged freedom than prevailed in France and Germany, rendered Flanders the medium of commercial communication between the coasts of the Mediterranean and the Baltic. It nearly monopolized that intermediate traffic, for its neighbours of France and Britain made no attempt to improve their respective opportunities for trade. English materials indeed were the principal subjects of Flemish skill; from the raw produce of the farms and pastures of England, Flanders derived the staple of her flax and

woollen manufactures. An emporium of merchandise, she acquired wealth and force; and was particularly distinguished for naval power. Resorting to Flanders to promote the purposes of the military alliance, Edward was not slow in observing the political state of that country. His perspicacious mind discovered the cause to be, its commerce and manufactures. He endeavoured to excite among his own subjects, that spirit of industry, which he found so beneficial to its votaries; and to direct it to those objects in which he perceived its efforts to be most productive. He invited Flemish artisans to settle in his dominions, and commenced the woollen manufactures in his own kingdom. Knowing his people to have genius, enterprise, and perseverance, he first turned those qualities towards the arts which have raised England to be the foremost among commercial nations. As Edward I. formed and digested English jurisprudence, so admirably fitted for rendering to every man his right, and guarding his property; Edward III. laid the foundation of that skill, and those efforts, which have acquired to Englishmen so much property to secure. From his engagements with Flanders originated naval victory,^p which united with his commercial views to impress on his mind the importance of maritime power. The splendid achievements at Cressy and Poitiers, so glorious to English valour, and to the courage and conduct of Edward and his renowned son, combining with the admired talents and character of both, gave to them and their country a weight in other European kingdoms, which England had never before possessed. The irritation of the contest produced a spirit of hostility, between the two first nations of the modern world. Frequent wars impeded the advances of both to an opulence and power suited to their respective genius and character. The reign of Edward III. may be considered in English history, as the great epoch of commencing manufactures and commerce in this nation; as the period when England began to have an extensive influence in the affairs of the continent; and when a spirit of regular and permanent hostility first broke out between England and France.

Edward III. in Flanders discovers the importance of manufactures and commerce.

Directs the genius of his English subjects to those objects.

Raises England to influence in the affairs of Europe.

Causes
that re-
tarded the
operation
of Ed-
ward's pol-
icy.

THOUGH the basis of British commerce and naval power was so ably and skilfully laid by Edward, yet general causes and particular events long retarded the superstructure. The martial spirit prevalent in England, when intermingled with the pride of feudal aristocracy, represented the manufacturer and merchant as despicable, in comparison to the soldier; and while the warlike character of the times depreciated in the public opinion the estimation in which those peaceful professions were held, and precluded from them the votaries of honour and fame, the violence and turbulence of those rude ages diminishing the security of property, often tended to obstruct the votaries of interest in their mercantile adventures. The character and circumstances of the succeeding sovereigns, and the contests about the throne, promoting for a century military energy, and not restraining turbulent violence and injustice, interrupted the natural progress of Edward's plans.

Feudal
aristocracy
and char-
acter.

Richard II.

THE feebleness of a long minority, the frivolity and profligacy of Richard's personal character, the jarring interests of the princes of the blood, and their respective pretensions to that power which the incapacity of the sovereign was so little qualified to hold, prevented any advances from being made in great schemes of policy. When Richard's sceptre was wrested from his weak hands by the skill and force of a powerful usurper, there still continued in the kingdom grounds of feud and discord

Henry IV.

very unfavourable to national improvement. Henry IV. provident, vigilant, and wise, comprehended the great importance of commerce, and promoted it to the utmost of his power. He formed a commercial treaty with the Hansetown merchants; and promoted the settlement of mercantile foreigners within his own kingdom. He devised and encouraged the formation of English factories in foreign parts; a proposition, which, as our knowledge of the globe enlarged, and our intercourse with remote countries extended, has in subsequent times been expanded into a grand and valuable system of colonization. He, like his grandfather, saw how necessary superiority at sea was to the security and prosperity of England, and made it one of his chief objects to maintain a formidable

navy.¹ He encouraged artisans and mariners, and inculcated industry; but the various insurrections by which his reign was disturbed, though all successfully quelled by his courage and conduct, interrupted the execution of his commercial schemes.

THE extraordinary genius of Henry V., equally fitted Henry V. for the field and the cabinet; directed its exertions chiefly to military superiority; but he was impressed with the importance of naval strength to England: he was as victorious at sea as at land; and in his reign the fleets of England rode triumphant in the channel. Eagerly intent, Attempted conquest of France. however, on conquering France, he could not bestow an adequate regard on the commercial advancement of his kingdom. After this great prince was prematurely cut off, the first years of his son's reign were employed in Henry VI. attempts to preserve and extend his father's conquests in France; but the succeeding part of his reign, replete with discomfiture abroad and discontent at home, lost the national superiority both by sea and land. The renowned Wars of Lancaster and York interrupt the progressive advancement of England, internal and external. earl of Warwick, indeed, recovered to England her maritime dominion; but the discords in which he soon took so active a part, and which terminated in such bloody and destructive civil wars, impeded industry, commerce, and all the peaceful arts, and involved England in grievous calamities. The duke of York, lineal heir to the crown, induced by the imbecility of the reigning prince, with probable grounds for expecting success, attempted to finish the usurpation which the talents and character of the two preceding monarchs appeared to have firmly established; and though he himself did not live to attain the wished for dignity, yet, seconded and supported by the illustrious Warwick, he paved the way for the speedy accession of his son.

EDWARD IV. to dissipation and profligacy joining Edward IV. great vigour of character whenever occasion required its efforts, exerting the maritime superiority of England with considerable success, invaded France with a powerful fleet. But the civil wars that recurred during the greater part of his reign, together with the indolence that marked his con-

Richard
III.

Civil wars
reduce the
feudal no-
bles.

duct when not stimulated by imperious and immediate necessity, prevented the promotion of commercial schemes in proportion to the resources of the country; of which the state at that time, exhausted by long wars and general devastation, was extremely unfavourable to the success of arts and of commerce. The short and cruel reign of Richard III., principally occupied in endeavouring to remove the consequences of one crime by the commission of others, was too much engaged in massacre and proscription to afford him leisure and attention for supporting the internal prosperity or maritime force of his country. The recent discomfiture of the English in France, added to their own internal dissensions, occasioned great distress, depopulated the kingdom, retarded agriculture and manufactures, and increased the ferocity of manners; while the profligate character of the princes of the house of York, and the wickedness which they excited or directed, introduced flagrant depravity. Edward having obtained possession of the throne by military force, however well founded his right, very frequently violated the constitution of his country, and tyrannised over the lives, liberty, and property of his subjects. His courtiers and favourites imitating his example, carried cruelty and oppression against their adversaries to a still greater pitch than even Edward himself. The ancient nobility of England were almost entirely annihilated by the dreadful contests. Her own fatal dissensions, added to her recent discomfiture in France, had lessened the influence of England on the continent. During the greatest part of the fifteenth century, her progress in point of internal civilization and prosperity as well as of foreign influence, was little proportioned to her intrinsic powers. Still, however, if her advances were obstructed, they were not altogether impeded. Learning raised her head, though mingled with the superstition of the cloisters, in which she had been cherished and preserved from total extinction. Various colleges were founded and institutions promoted, which proved ultimately favourable to the advancement of knowledge. The cultivated taste of polished ages, or the enlarged moral and political science of enlightened philosophers, were not to be expected in a state of society

clouded with darkness, and fettered with superstition; yet some of the seeds were now sown, which afterwards ripened into literature.

THE efforts of reviving learning, though not very judiciously directed, were by no means feeble. The metaphysical theology of the schools, originating in misapprehension concerning the most profound of philosophers,^r was not devoid of Grecian acuteness; and if its discoveries did not greatly expand the understanding, or its spirit liberalize the sentiments, yet its contentions, by sharpening and invigorating the faculties, paved the way for intellectual and moral improvement. Increased sagacity began to produce discussion of authority in matters of thought and reasoning: the bold doctrines of Wickliffe, though chiefly opposed by menace and persecution, still excited a few of the clergy to employ more rational arguments. Cotemporary or collateral heresies moved some ecclesiastics to prepare, by literary effort, for the defence of the existing superstition; while they disposed and formed others for attack. But erudition, narrowly as it was still diffused, was not entirely confined to the church. Humphry of Gloucester was a prince of considerable learning;^s Anthony earl of Rivers and John earl of Worcester, in the reigns of Henry IV. and Edward, were eminent for literary knowledge.^t Gallant and meritorious as were many of the nobles, who perished in the wars between Lancaster and York, their fall tended ultimately to the reduction of the feudal aristocracy, which, though never so entirely predominant in England as to stifle all remains of Saxon liberty, was yet so prevalent as greatly to encroach on the constitutional rights of a free people. Generally bloody as were the wars, the animosity of contending chieftains, and the resentment, rapacity, or jealous fears of the successive conquerors, rendered the proportion of grandees either killed in battle, or massacred by cruelty, much greater than that of the gentry, yeomanry, traders, and subordinate orders. The rising consequence of the great body of English commons, eventually

Efforts of
reviving
learning.

^r See in Dr. Gillie's Preface to his translation of Aristotle, his account of the difference between Aristotle's text and the comments of his professed interpreters.

^s See Hume's History of England, vol. iii. p. 2.

^t Henry's History, vol. x. p. 147.

saved their country from the absolute monarchy which overwhelmed the neighbouring nations.

Different
institutions
of England
and of
France.

SIMILAR indeed, in calamitous circumstances at different though near periods of the fifteenth century, but dissimilar in the original institutions and in the ranks and orders of men which these generated; France and England were destined to experience very unlike systems of policy, at the time they both advanced in civilization and knowledge. When the French nobility, after being so much exhausted by internal dissensions and the wars with England, were farther impaired by the crafty, unfeeling, and oppressive policy of Lewis XI.; there being no intermediate orders between them and the labouring people, who were actually slaves, all ranks were involved in one vortex of arbitrary dominion. France became a simple monarchy; while England, by rearing and cherishing a middle class, which augmented in force as spreading industry and increasing knowledge enlarged the means of acquiring moderate independence, was improved into a free constitution, providing equally for the governing and governed, and proposing the general welfare as the only legitimate object of political establishments and national conduct.

In England
the mid-
dling class
preserves
liberty.

Henry VII.
improve-
ments un-
der him.

To the promotion of these beneficial purposes, no sovereign was more instrumental than Henry VII.: though his measures originated in the peculiar circumstances of his situation, rather than in liberal policy; yet, without allowing either wisdom or goodness the full credit of the beneficial effects produced, an impartial examiner of his actions, and their evident consequences, must see, that he promoted the prosperity and meliorated the condition of England. He, indeed, was the first who carried effectually into execution the great plans of improvement devised by the genius of his illustrious predecessor Edward III. Contracted in sentiment, covetous in disposition, and suspicious in temper, Henry did not always propose the most benevolent ends. Vigorous and penetrating in intellect, cautious in deliberation but decisive in conduct, he both devised and employed the most apposite means. Apprehending the adherents of the house of York to be inimical to his own doubtful title, if he did not create, he probably brought into action, discontents which might have lain dor-

made; but when dissatisfaction rose to revolt, he with firmness and prudence suppressed repeated rebellions. Expecting or suspecting the principal enmity to subsist among the higher ranks, he was anxious to weaken the order of nobles: he permitted the barons to break the entails of their estates, and made laws to prevent them from retaining large bodies of clients, which rendered them formidable and turbulent." He encouraged agriculture and commerce, perhaps with a view (as our great historian conjectures) of gratifying his avarice by filling his coffers from imposts; and he concluded several very useful commercial treaties, which, though somewhat narrow in their principles, were in their operation lucrative. He bestowed great attention on the promotion of navigation; as, before his time, foreign trade had been chiefly carried on in foreign bottoms, he endeavoured, with considerable success, to procure to English ships the carriage of our own exports and imports.

Here reduces
the feudal
aristocracy,

DURING this reign a spirit of maritime adventure for the purposes of discovery and commerce arose in several parts of Europe. The invention of the compass encouraged navigators to explore oceans before untried by Europeans. Venice and Genoa had hitherto monopolized the traffic of the Western world to India. Portugal, in the fifteenth century, was governed by a succession of courageous, able, and enterprising princes; who, perceiving the advantages accruing to the Italian republics from a trade with India, attempted to employ their maritime situation in profitable traffic. Nautical adventurers, directed by the princes of that country, proceeded gradually along the coast of Africa. At length, they extended their voyage to the southern promontory of that immense peninsula: to which, foreseeing it would open a passage to the East Indies, they gave the name of the Cape of Good Hope; and a few years after arriving on the Malabar coast, showed to western Europe, that India was more easily accessible to its commercial adventurers, than to its eastern neighbours; and that oriental riches were no longer to be exclusively acquired by the coasting traders of the Mediterranean, but to be shared by

and encourages
navigation
and nautical
discovery.

the bold essayers of unknown oceans. But while Vasquez di Gama found out an accessible though circuitous course, from the shores of the northern Atlantic to the southern regions of Hindostan, Columbus, by the force of his genius, conceived, and by the boldness of his enterprise and perseverance discovered, to the inhabitants of Europe, much nearer to their own coasts, a new world, replete with incentives to commerce and navigation; and abounding not only with materials for riches, but with subjects of reflection, and means for enlarging human comprehension and enjoyment. Soon after the illustrious Florentine found the West Indies, Americus Vesputius, in prosecution of Columbus's plan, arrived at the southern continent, and gave his own name to a quarter of the globe discovered by another. Accident, and not the parsimony of Henry, prevented England from enjoying the honour of this signal discovery. He soon fitted out a squadron, which sailed to the west, in order to explore unknown regions in latitudes more contiguous to his own kingdom, and seek a nearer passage to India than by doubling Africa. Sebastian Cabot conducted the enterprise, and arrived at a coast to which he gave the name of Newfoundland. Steering along to the southward as far as that part of the coast which has since been named Virginia, he ascertained that there were large tracts of land adjacent, convenient for naval enterprise upon the Atlantic. Though Henry did not attempt to establish a settlement on this coast, yet the enterprise was of the highest importance, as it stimulated England to farther nautical adventure. A spirit of navigation, commerce, and discovery was excited by Henry, which afterwards generally diffused itself, and called into action the maritime exertions of these islands, improved by all the sagacity and energy of the national character when employed in the most beneficial direction.

Sebastian
Cabot.

Growing
importance of
England
among
continental
powers.

BUT while Henry thus promoted the commerce, navigation, and internal prosperity of his country, he extended her influence among foreign states. He loved peace, without fearing war. Though by no means comprehensive in his views of European policy, he understood sufficiently the relations, objects, and condition of other kingdoms, to provide for the security and defence of his own dominions.

He was courted by cotemporary princes in every part of Europe, and the English nation was never so closely interwoven in continental affairs as during his reign. Other circumstances concurred with the personal character of Henry, to extend the intercourse between England and the nations of the continent. Previous to the fifteenth century, little political connexion had subsisted between the neighbouring states of Europe; their reciprocal hostilities were rather the effect of passion and personal animosity, than of any well digested system of policy. Their means of reciprocal annoyance, occasional impost, and temporary militia, though sufficiently adapted to the desultory conflicts of the pride or resentment of rival chieftains, were little fitted for the purposes of systematic war. When England, under Henry V., and in the posthumous execution of his great and ambitious projects, had almost overwhelmed France, the neighbouring principalities of Germany and Spain bestowed no attention on an event menacing the security and independence of Europe.* The contests between the several kingdoms of Spain, evidently tending to unite that part of the continent into one great empire, were regarded by the rest of Europe with equal indifference. Princes were little affected by remote or eventual danger. This inattention did not entirely arise from the want of sagacity to foresee distant contingencies, but proceeded in a considerable degree from the condition of their dominions, which called their consideration to present and proximate objects. The power of the barons under the feudal system, often either distracting the public tranquillity by the feuds of rivalry, menacing the sovereign by rebellion, or by oppression driving the populace to insurrection, with the imperfections of the civil government, so fully occupied the sovereigns, as to leave them little leisure to survey foreign affairs. This was especially the situation of France, the most compact, central, and populous kingdom of Europe; and the best fitted from the advantages of her situation, the number and character of her people, if internally well governed, either to secure herself, or to protect or disturb her neighbours. The siefs into which that kingdom was

State of
Europe.

* See Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 89. The same truth may be gathered from Hume's history of those wars, though it is not so expressly stated.

divided, weakened the force of the monarchy; but from the destruction of the nobility in the wars with England, the rapacious policy of Lewis XI., and the reannexation of the English possessions and detached principalities to the crown, government was rendered almost simply monarchical. This event was accelerated at home, and its influence extended abroad, by another effect of the wars. These generated standing armies, which, being now first employed by Charles VII. to preserve his crown, and afterwards maintained by him to humble the remainder of his barons, were now enlarged by his son, and exercised in crushing the ancient nobility, and seizing the territories of his neighbours.

Princes
become in-
ternally
strong.

CHARLES VIII. the son and successor of Lewis XI. found the nobility incapable of opposing the will or projects of the prince, and a powerful army, with little to employ its force but the resumption of Brittany. He effected this purpose partly by war, and finally by marriage. The monarch of France, now no longer occupied at home by the English or his barons, from efforts commencing in successful defence and progressively extending to internal usurpation, began to prepare measures of offence against independent states, which had given him no provocation. For the execution of such designs, he possessed subjects whose energy of character rendered them formidable and efficient instruments against all with whom they were at war, either justly or unjustly. Having invaded Italy with a powerful force, he first presented France as the disturber of Europe; a character which she has so often resumed in the three following centuries, with strength of operation, and vicissitudes of event; not rarely with injustice of principles, impolicy of object, and pernicious result. Charles overran Italy from the Alps to the southern extremity, and possessed himself of the city and kingdom of Naples. Neighbouring nations were now acquiring similar efficiency of force with France by similar means; by the reduction of the nobles, the consolidation of principalities, the reunion of fiefs under the lords paramount, and the employment of a standing army. Exempted from constant anxiety and apprehensions from their own subjects, they were enabled to watch the conduct of their neighbours;

Begin vigi-
lantly to
observe
the con-
duct of
their
neigh-
bours.

and, in observing their motions, to view distant probabilities as well as immediate effects. The most powerful prince of the continent after Charles of France, was Ferdinand of Arrogan, who was now, by his marriage with Isabella of Castile, actual sovereign of Spain. This prudent prince, alarmed at a progress which endangered the safety of his dominions, combined with the Italian states and Maximilian of Austria in forming a confederacy to repel the prosperous aggression of France, and confine the invader to his ancient dominions. The object and principle of this alliance form an epoch in political history, as the first effort of modern times to maintain a balance of power; which is merely self-preservation in a community, dictating plans of policy, to provide against circuitous injury and annoyance, as well as against direct attacks. To this treaty, which was concluded at Cambray, Henry VII. acceded; and, though his general caution, and distance from the scene of hostilities, did not suffer him to take an active share in the war, yet his junction in the alliance is an epoch in the history of England; because England then first joined in a continental confederacy to repress the offensive measures of France.

Balance of power.

Weight of England in the scale.

THOUGH the reign of Henry VII. conduced eventually to political as well as commercial and naval improvement, yet the extension of freedom, far from being Henry's object, was by no means the immediate effect of his measures. The aristocracy was reduced, but the people were not yet risen to such strength and importance as to oppose a sufficient bulwark to the augmented powers of the crown. Twenty-eight temporal lords only formed the first house of peers after Henry's accession; and the order was soon found to have decreased in authority, as well as in number and

Effects of Henry's reign on the English constitution,

y From history it appears, that the sagacious Greeks very early discerned the necessity of resisting efforts against others, which might extend to themselves. Animosity, ambition, and pride, were not the sole causes of the Peloponnesian confederacy against Athens; but, in a considerable degree, the apprehension of growing power. When the Spartans became in their turn predominant, a similar confederacy was formed, to reduce the excess of their power; an object to which the Athenians adhered with such nicety of discrimination, that when they found the scale preponderate in favour of the Thebans, sacrificing all animosity to sound policy, they joined the Spartans in order to preserve the balance of power. See Gillies, vol. ii. chap. 5. vol. iii. chap. 27. and 30.; but mostly in the last. Other Histories also illustrate this observation respecting the Greeks, whose policy was so contrary to that of other ancient nations, especially the victims of progressive Roman conquest.

possessions. In the interval between the fall of the barons and the rise of the commons, the power of the crown was much greater than in former reigns. Henry VII. may justly be termed an absolute prince. His government was arbitrary, both in the series of his acts, and the general regulations or laws which through him were established.* In his time the authority of the star chamber was revived, and in some cases confirmed by law, and armed with powers the most dangerous and unconstitutional over the persons and properties of the subjects. Informations were allowed to be received, instead of indictments, in order to multiply fines and pecuniary penalties. A tendency, directly or indirectly, to augment the emoluments of the exchequer, was the general character of his laws. Ambition in Henry, descending from its lofty rank, became the humble minister of avarice; but the joint effects of both passions, though hurtful at the time, were destined by Providence to be beneficial to posterity.

and general welfare of the people.

Henry VIII.

HENRY VIII. was disposed to promote the commercial improvements which his father had begun; but the knowledge which either he himself or his ministers possessed of the subject, was extremely imperfect. On the whole, all the direct acts and immediate consequences of his government were inauspicious to nautical discovery, and the extension of commerce. Navigation and trade were indeed advanced during this period, but rather by the efforts of private adventurers, than the policy of either the sovereign or the legislature. The first part of Henry's reign was chiefly occupied at home in pleasurable dissipation, and courtly splendour, under the magnificent and ostentatious ministry of Wolsey; wasting in sumptuous entertainments and costly pomp, the riches which the avarice of his father had acquired. The luxuries of the court requiring foreign supplies, stimulated private adventure, and, without any meritorious plans of the sovereign or his counsellors, encouraged the importation of commodities from distant, and even newly discovered countries. The spirit of maritime enterprise excited by the last king, though little promoted by his

* Blackstone's commentaries, vol. iv. chap. 33. on the progress of the English laws and constitution.

son, operated on the nation, and the circle of trade was gradually enlarged in various quarters of the world.

THOUGH no English colonies were yet settled in any part of the new world, their merchants carried on a trade with the islands in the West Indies which had been seized and settled by the Spaniards: they had agents residing in some of these settlements, particularly in the great island of Cuba, for the management of their trade. Mr. Thorn of Bristol, one of the greatest merchants and boldest adventurers of the age, established a factory at Cuba; and was the first Englishman who set the example of a commercial settlement in the new world. Employing the opportunities he thereby acquired, not only for the purposes of present traffic, but for discovery and future extension of commerce, he sent agents to the Spanish fleet, furnished with great sums of money, to bring exact charts of the seas, rivers, and lands, which they visited, and as accurate a description of the accessibility, state, and productions, of the several countries, as they could procure.^a The spirit of discovery in private adventurers was no less ardent, than the desire of trading with countries already known. Henry, in the beginning of his reign, appeared eager to promote inquiry into new regions, and fitted out ships for exploring the southern ocean. But the expedition by some misconduct or mischance having failed,^b the king, from a fickleness incident to violent minds, and the prominent feature in his character, totally abandoned all thoughts of such undertakings. Merchants and mariners, however, persevered; and though some of their voyages appear not to have been lucrative, yet, by adding to the national stock of nautical science, and extending the sphere of English navigation, they produced important advantages.

Two ships destined for South America were committed to Cabot, which visited the Brazils. The knowledge of that coast, and its great projection into the Atlantic, being acquired, Hawkins, father to the renowned voyager, directed his course to the same country, and having opened a traffic with the Brazilians, crossing over to the opposite promontory, was the first Englishman who surveyed

^a Hackluyt, vol. ii. p. 726.

^b Henry, vol. xii. p. 327.

the coast of Guinea. With their progress in gain, the desires of English mariners increased; and, their ideas expanding with the advancement of knowledge, they directed their thoughts to Indian opulence. In their voyages to the Mediterranean, having traded to its eastern coasts, they received accurate information concerning the riches of Hindostan, which before were only imperfectly known through distant and uncertain report. In their intercourse with Portugal, they beheld with envy the vast wealth that flowed into that country from the regions of the east.^c

Attempts
to find out
a north-
west pas-
sage.

Conceiving with Columbus, that the islands which he first discovered lay contiguous to the vast continent comprehended under the general name of India, they hoped to find a more compendious passage, through which, by easily outstripping the Portuguese and all southern Europe, they might acquire the principal share of the treasures of India. Unsuccessful as the attempt proved to discover a north-west passage, and unfortunate as the adventurers were, yet the undertaking showed a bold spirit of commercial enterprise. Notwithstanding partial discouragements and failures, the general result of private maritime pursuits in Henry's reign, was a great accession of trade and riches to the country. Under this monarch, from the progression of causes that began to operate through Europe in his father's reign, the interests of European powers became more involved and intermixed, than they had been at any former period.

Continental
policy
of Henry,

HENRY attained with the continental powers a very great degree of influence: he indeed held the balance, but turned the scale according to present impulse and passion; being more frequently actuated by the suggestions of his proud, ambitious, and resentful favourite, than either by equity or sound policy. When he ascended the throne, the power of France, superior to any other nation on the continent, the hostile jealousy between that country and England, and the connexion and affinity between Henry and Ferdinand, concurred in rendering the English king inimical to the French,

LEWIS XII. was eager, like his predecessor, to conquer Naples; but the opposition of Ferdinand, joined to

^c Robertson's posthumous America.

the treachery of that crafty and unprincipled monarch, prevented his success. A new field, however, was soon opened for the ambition of Lewis. Julius II. like many of his predecessors on the papal throne, instead of promoting the meek benevolence of the christian religion, was the incendiary of unprovoked and iniquitous war. By his intrigues, a partition treaty was framed between the three great powers of Austria, Spain, and France, for dismembering the dominions and dividing the riches of the illustrious republic of Venice. A league was formed at Cambray for this nefarious purpose ; and it was stipulated, that the pope, who instigated the robbery and projected the plan, should have a considerable share of the plunder acquired by more powerful and efficient perpetrators.^d Such confederacies, composed of jarring materials, contain the seeds of their own dissolution. The rapid successes of French energy filled the allies with jealousy and alarm. The pope, who had first planned this alliance of the great powers, anxiously sought to excite discord among the several members, involving them in mutual quarrels, that he might expel them successively from Italy, and enjoy without control the sole direction of that country.^e He detached Ferdinand from the league, and endeavoured, through that prince and his own influence, to excite Henry to war with France. The sagacious prelate, thoroughly knowing the characters with which he had to deal, made suitable applications : he first addressed himself to Ferdinand's interest ; then to Henry's love of distinction, national animosity to the French, and passionate zeal for the catholic religion ; in which, as in every thing else, his ardour was violent, and spurned at all contradiction. He persuaded Henry, that in attacking France, he should fight the cause of the church, which Lewis was most profanely defying ; he flattered and promoted his ambassador ; and led Henry to expect, that the title of *the Most Christian King*, so precious an ornament to the French monarchy, should be transferred to the English sovereign. To fix the impression of his reli-

^d See the outlines of this confederacy and its operations, in Robertson's *Charles V.* vol. i. p. 117 to 120 ; and Hume, vol. iii. p. 200 to 205. For the detail, see Guicciardini ; and l'Abbe du Bos, *Histoire de la ligue de Cambray*.

^e Guicciardini, lib. viii.

vigorous
but unwise.

gious authority on this devout monarch, he sent him a sacred rose, perfumed with musk, and anointed with chrism.^f Inspired by devotion, impatient for displaying to Europe his power and importance, and reviving the ancient claims upon France, Henry engaged in a war, which was neither necessary to the security, nor conducive to the interests, of his kingdom. Chivalrous impolicy engaged the romantic James in the contest, and kindled a war between Scotland and England. The disciplined valour of the southern Britons overcame the impetuous rashness of northern heroism, and obtained a victory, fatal to the vanquished, and brilliant but useless to the conquerors. English courage and military prowess were again displayed in France with splendid achievements, and signal success, but followed by no important advantage : and all parties perceiving the unavoidable necessity of putting an end to the calamities of war, a treaty of peace was concluded, which comprehended all the belligerent powers.

AFTER peace and tranquillity had continued for several years, a new state of European affairs gave a change to the scale of power, and to the policy that was expedient for maintaining the balance. Charles of Austria had now succeeded to all the inheritances and acquisitions of his paternal grandfather and grandmother in Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries ; and to all the inheritances and acquisitions of his maternal grandfather and grandmother in Spain, Italy, Africa, and the new world.^g Francis, the first of that name, had ascended the throne of France on the death of his cousin Lewis. The relative position and state of their territories led these two princes to political rivalry, while other causes concurred in inflaming their competition. They were both young, and succeeded to their respective possessions about the same time ; both were endued with great abilities, though of dissimilar dispositions ; and both became masters of very extensive resources. Beside so many general grounds of emulous animosity, they had a special source in their respective application for the Imperial diadem. The ap-

^f See Hume, vol. iii. p. 259. to 26.

^g Robertson's Charles V., vol. ii. p. A

pointment of Charles, and rejection of Francis, called immediately into action those causes of hostility which must have soon operated from their reciprocal situation and respective characters. Between these two mighty monarchs, Henry of England only, by the greatness of his power, was fitted to hold the balance. Quick in perception, and vigorous in capacity, he readily saw the general policy of preserving an equipoise; and, devoted to the honour of his country, as well as to his own glory, he valued himself on being the umpire of Europe. But though his talents were considerable, his judgment was not proportionably sound; at least, its exertions were too easily swayed by the impulse of temper and passion.

THE accumulated possessions of the emperor Charles V. rendered him manifestly superior to Francis; political security, the principle of English interference in continental affairs,^g required that Henry should lean towards France; but he cherished the ancient English enmity to an opposite neighbour. Francis, who resembled Henry in many of the accomplishments on which he greatly prided himself, and in some parts of his character, (though much superior on the whole,) was the object of his personal rivalry. Henry was moreover governed by his favourite Wolsey, whom Charles courted, and bribed most lavishly for the present, flattering him with the hopes of being raised to the papal dignity, at that time the highest in christendom. Instigated by this imperious counsellor, the English king adopted a policy totally inconsistent with the interests of his kingdom; made war with France, and, by weakening that country, rendered it more easy for Charles to increase his already overgrown power. When Francis, defeated and a prisoner, was reduced to the lowest pitch of distress, Henry's motive of interference was much less the necessity of repressing Charles, than the persuasions of Wolsey; who, disappointed of the expected promotion, (most fortunately for the independence of Europe,) became as violent against the emperor as he had

Political security, the principle of English interference in foreign affairs.

^g See lord Grenville's speech on the Russian armament in 1791; Mr. Pitt's speech on the negotiation with Buonaparte; Mr. Fox's speeches on the continental connexions which England ought to pursue; Mr. Pitt's applying the same principle to our alliance with Holland and Prussia; and parliamentary speeches on the object and grounds of the late war.

been before in his favour. Henry's conduct towards Catharine widened the breach between him and her nephew ; so that, during the rest of his reign, he was, with very few intermissions, closely connected with Francis, and Charles was prevented from endangering the liberties of Europe.

Henry fully displayed the English strength, though often injudiciously directed.

THE part which Henry took in the affairs of the continent, though far from being uniformly wise, or even, when right, proceeding from reasons of sound policy, was generally efficacious. It demonstrated the force and weight of the English power, though not always wielded by the king from the best motives, or for the most useful purposes. The reign of this monarch, the first period of active and uniform interference in the transactions of the continent, showed that England was at least an efficient member of the great European republic ; and that her relative power being once ascertained, its utility to herself or her neighbours would depend upon the wisdom or folly, the justice or injustice, of her directors.

The reformation.

THE most momentous event by which Henry's reign is distinguished, is the reformation ; a change accelerated by particular incidents, collisions of passion, and individual circumstances, but originating in general causes. Among these, on the one hand, were the scandalous profligacy of the clergy, the grasping rapacity of their avarice, the enormous usurpations of their ambition, the overweening insolence of their pride, and the gross ignorance of the great part of that immense body, multiplying the absurdities of superstition, which had overwhelmed the wisdom and benevolence of the christian religion ; and on the other, the progressive expansion of the human faculties, from that contracted state into which they had been confined about the expiration of the tenth century,^h and from which, though slowly at first, they had since gradually extricated themselves. The understandings of men, enlightened by knowledge, became more acute and vigorous by exertion, and their moral discernment more just. That great engine of intellectual communication, THE PRESS, was now invent-

^h See Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. ; and Hume's general observations on the predecessors of Henry VII. at the conclusion of the reign of Richard III.

ed; men began to read, and to reason on what they did read. The bible, which had been so studiously concealed by the priesthood, was discovered and perused. Penetration, now assisted by learning, found out that many of the articles of faith, and injunctions of both ritual and moral practice, were not only incompatible with conscience, reason, and common sense, but opposite to genuine christianity as contained in the scriptures.

FINDING so many defects in the superstructure, men gradually began to examine the basis. Such was the course which the renowned Luther pursued: who, perceiving the absurdity and wickedness of selling indulgences to vice and profligacy, and demonstrating what he perceived, proceeded from one step of discovery to another, until he found that the whole system of papal superstition was raised upon an hypothesis totally inconsistent with history, experience, and reason; that its principle was the infallibility of a human being, which was obviously false, and consequently that the whole train of deductions depending upon this principle, were inadmissible on its authority. With the intrinsic absurdity of papal superstitions, which diffused reason and knowledge tended to dispel; with the profligacy of the clergy, which conscience prompted to reprobate and oppose; the policy and passions of princes and other individuals, no doubt, concurred in promoting the reformation commenced by Luther. Revived learning, however, raising human intellect to its real dignity, and through the press spreading its influence much more extensively than even in the enlightened ages of antiquity, soon destroyed ecclesiastical thralldom, and dispelled gloomy superstition. The metaphysical subtleties of one set of reformers might be different from those of another; but THE MOST ESSENTIAL AND VALUABLE PART OF THE REFORM, THE EMANCIPATION OF HUMAN REASON FROM THE CHAINS OF HUMAN AUTHORITY, sprang from the efforts of that reason, and was the source of the principal advantages, religious, moral, civil, and political, which resulted from this great revolution in the church. These changes, though operating chiefly in the country where enfranchised genius and learning had arrived at the highest pitch, were not confined to nations which

formally protested against the authority of an Italian clergyman, but extended to countries where the pope's supremacy was still acknowledged.

In protestant states, however, besides this great and general advantage from the overthrow of papal authority, many other more important benefits accrued, especially in England. Immense sums and demesnes, the tributes of superstition and credulity to hypocrisy, fraud, and imposture, or the exactions of tyrannic violence from the terrors of weakness, which had been employed in fostering sloth, idleness, and sensuality, were now amalgamated into the mass of national property, encouraged rising industry, and improved the public revenue. The reformation tended to promote agriculture, trade, manufactures, and private and public opulence, the means of national defence, security, prosperity, power, and glory. Thus a revolution at first sight theological, became a most important event in the commercial history of Britain. It tended also to the improvement of English jurisprudence; by removing from that admirable system, all those pernicious incumbrances, which had been imposed on our laws by clerical artifice and usurpation, to shelter crimes.ⁱ

Effects of it
on the com-
mercial
political,
and moral
character
of Eng-
land.

By the reduction of the clerical aristocracy, the still enfeebled state of the lay aristocracy, and the hitherto slow progress of the commons; the abject servility of parliaments; the vigorous talents, inflexible temper, and violent passions of the sovereign; this reign, though ultimately conducive to liberty, was more absolute than any recorded in the English history. Though the open, liberal, and intrepid mind of the monarch, never exercised his authority in the treachery, dissimulation, and baseness, so prevalent in despotic courts, yet the ungovernable fury of his affections, the profusion and rapacity of his disposition, and the violence and capriciousness of his inclinations, with the fickle bigotry of his everchanging theology, rendered him unjust, oppressive, tyrannical, and cruel. Under the sanction of those pusillanimous parliaments, the encroachments of monarchical power were established by

ⁱ Blackstone, vol. iv. c. 16 and 18. on the benefit of clergy; and chap. 33. on the progress of the law and constitution of England, fourth period, under Henry VIII.

law. But the political evils of Henry's reign which resulted from individual character and special circumstances, were only temporary; the good arising from the general causes, was permanent, and contained in itself the means of progressive improvement.

THE short reign of Edward VI. tended in many respects to extend the advantages, and correct the mischiefs, of Henry's government. Commerce and discovery made considerable advances at this period. The trade of England had hitherto been carried on chiefly by foreigners, especially by a corporate company from the Hanstowns, called the merchants of the Steelyard. In former reigns, these had engrossed a great part of the traffic with foreign countries, and employed German or Flemish shipping. This establishment, which was encouraged by Edward III. and succeeding princes, in order to teach the English commercial lessons, and excite mercantile emulation among them, had been long extremely useful. The council of young Edward perceiving that the reasons for encouraging these foreigners no longer existed, and that a spirit of mercantile adventure being now raised among the natives of England, such privileges enjoyed by aliens interfered with the national interest, found it necessary to annul them, and place all foreigners on an inferior footing to native subjects. This change contributed greatly to the advancement of commerce and navigation:^k and a commercial treaty was concluded with Sweden, on the solid principle of reciprocal exchange of superfluity to supply mutual want.^l The great fishery on the banks of Newfoundland became an object of attention, and was prosecuted with activity and success.^m The English still cherished the idea of opening a communication with eastern riches, by a more expeditious course than the Cape of Good Hope. Cabot, so renowned for naval enterprise, urged the English, instead of steering towards the northwest, which had proved unsuccessful, to attempt the discovery of the desired passage by the northeast. At his instance, and under his direction, several noblemen and persons of rank, together with some principal merchants, having associated for

Edward
VI.

Result of
Henry's
reign.

Edward
promotes
navigation
and com-
merce.

^k See Hume, vol. iii. p. 449.

^l Ibid. p. 450.

^m Robertson's *potshumous America*, p. 16.; and Hackluyt's *voyages*, *passim*.

this purpose, were incorporated by a charter, under the title of the Company of Merchants Adventurers for the discovery of regions, dominions, islands, and places unknown. Two ships and a bark were equipped for this service; and though they failed in the great end of their expedition, one ship and the bark being lost, yet the other effected very important discoveries. An intercourse with the vast empire of Russia, before unknown to English adventurers, was opened; and, on the return of this ship, a mercantile company was formed for trading with Muscovy. Attempts were now made to open a communication with India and China by land, through the new connexion with Russia, by Astracan and the Caspian sea; and though the adventurers did not penetrate so far as they intended, yet they acquired a knowledge of the countries, commodities, and inhabitants of Turkey; which, combined with the maritime enterprises in the Mediterranean, laid the foundation of English commerce with the Ottomans. A commercial intercourse was also opened with the western coasts of Africa; while the traffic begun with Barbary was considerably extended in the reigns of Edward and Mary.

THE war with Scotland, in which Henry had left his kingdom engaged, together with the factions which prevailed under the protectorship of Somerset and the administration of Warwick, prevented Edward from possessing on the continent that influence which his father had maintained. The distractions of English councils, and the connexion with Scotland, now so closely united by the affiance of the dauphin with the infant queen, encouraged and stimulated the French monarch to attack England in war; and though hostilities were soon ended by a peace, the English, torn by dissensions, were losers by the treaty; nor did this kingdom afterwards, in the course of Edward's reign, interfere with effect in continental politics. The internal part of Edward's history is of the highest importance. The first session of his parliament repealed all the laws enacted through the arbitrary violence of Henry, which had tyrannically extended the crimes of treason and felony, and made heresy a capital offence.

and abrogates the tyrannical laws of his father.

THE protestant religion was fully established, and though the reformation might not extend to every principle and doctrine which unfettered reason could impugn, yet it proceeded as far as the sentiments, knowledge, and character of the nation could bear. The reform was great, though less violent and more gradual than in some other countries, where they laid the whole hierarchy prostrate; yet from its moderate and progressive nature it was the more likely to be durable. While it humbled the pride and ambition of the clergy, and restrained their avarice and profligacy, it left them rank and property, to maintain the dignity conducive to the purposes of their office, in a country where great diversity of rank and property prevailed. Abolishing much useless pageantry, the English reformers, aware that men are as frequently led by their senses and imaginations, as swayed by their hearts and understandings, left a sufficient degree of pomp, ceremony, and accompaniments, to amuse the fancy, and please the eye and the ear, without substituting idolatry for real devotion.

THE leading features of Mary's character were, an *Mary.* ardent and boundless zeal for Romish bigotry, and an ungovernable love for the man whom she married. These passions, enhancing and inflaming each other, account for the most important transactions of her short and detestable reign. At once a religious and an amorous devotee, she persecuted and butchered protestants, to please herself and her bigotted and cruel husband; while to gratify his wishes, and secure a greater portion of his company and love, she oppressed and exhausted her people, and engaged in a most impolitic and destructive war.^m Humanity, patriotism, justice, every duty of morality and genuine christianity, were sacrificed to the violence of her affections. Many beneficial laws, however, were enacted in her reign, which, though proposed by Mary to reconcile the people to her schemes of restoring the Romish faith and hierarchy, and to her extortions of their money to lavish on her husband, produced permanent good, while the evil of being governed by the tool of such infuriating passions, was a temporary evil, and, fortunately for the kingdom,

Her reign, though tyrannical, productive of beneficial laws.

^m See Hume's History of Mary, passim.

of short duration. The gloom was soon dispersed, and followed by the most resplendent brightness.

Elizabeth

THE reign of Elizabeth, so auspicious to the prosperity and happiness of her subjects, was extremely favourable to the rising spirit of navigation, discovery, and commerce. The peace, foreign and domestic, which her wisdom and firmness preserved with little interruption for almost the first thirty years of her reign, notwithstanding the hostile jealousy of surrounding nations, the furious passions which agitated the continent, and the discontent which bigotry and rivalry kindled or fanned in her own kingdom, were peculiarly conducive to the enterprising efforts of able, bold, and adventurous Englishmen. Strict and vigilant economy exempted her subjects from the burden of taxes injurious to trade; the popularity of her administration among the greater part of her subjects, overawing disaffection and preventing commotion, left her people full liberty to pursue nautical and commercial enterprise. Undisturbed by the factions of a turbulent minority, or the cruel persecutions of frantic bigotry, the sagacious Elizabeth, like the greatest of her predecessors, saw that the security of a kingdom environed by the sea must depend on its naval force.

promotes
commerce
and discov-
ery,

and forms
the English
navy.

ONE of the first acts of her government was to increase the number and strength of her navy. Before her reign, the English had commonly been supplied with large ships by foreigners. The queen, desirous of having the resources of strength and the vehicles of riches furnished within her own kingdom, filled her arsenals with naval stores promoted shipbuilding, and encouraged her subjects to bend their attention to pursuits which were destined to render themselves and their posterity eminent among nations. With this view she built several ships of great force and versatility; and as the skill of artificers improved, the number of sailors increased; and from the reign of Elizabeth may be dated the first regulation of the English navy. Her patronage and example stimulated and invigorated the efforts of her subjects in shipbuilding and nautical expeditions. Carefully examining the advances made under her predecessors, she improved their discoveries and acquisitions; cultivated and extended the connex-

ion formed with the Russian sovereign; secured to her subjects the continuance of their exclusive and lucrative trade with his dominions; and encouraged the incorporated body of merchants enjoying that trade, to resume their endeavours of penetrating by land into eastern Asia. Their efforts were at length successful in opening a lucrative trade with Persia, which manifesting to her subjects the riches of the east, produced a resolution of resorting to these countries by sea.

As the English advanced in the knowledge of Asia and its productions, their ardour increased to discover a short nautical course to these opulent regions. Their disappointments in the northwest and the northeast, did not entirely chill their hopes: they still flattered themselves that they might discover an outlet which had hitherto baffled their inquiries; and Frobisher, in three successive voyages, explored the coasts of Labrador and of Greenland, but without discovering the northwest passage. Though the disappointment was sensibly felt, yet English courage and enterprise rose superior to disappointment. Sir Francis Drake, so renowned in naval history, determined to sail round the world; an undertaking hitherto achieved by Magellan only. Having successfully finished this formidable voyage, and acquired an accurate and distinct conception of the commodities both of the east and west, he inspirited his countrymen to bolder and more comprehensive schemes of naval and commercial enterprise, than any which they had hitherto attempted. The English had formerly seen and acknowledged themselves far surpassed in seamanship by the Flemings and Italians, and recently by the Portuguese, who were the first for naval reputation in the annals of history. They now rivalled that country in its most splendid enterprise: and having rapidly risen from inferiority to equality, they doubted not soon to attain a striking superiority. Having confirmed their skill, they felt their force; and perceived that the surrounding ocean, so long neglected, was an Englishman's element, on which he was destined to excel. They formed a notion eventually true, bold, and beneficial, that no object attainable by human ability exerted in maritime effort, is beyond the reach of English seamen; a nautical

Voyages to
America.

Sir Francis
Drake sails
round the
world.

and commercial enthusiasm, therefore, diffused itself through the country.

First seeds
of coloniza-
tion.

ENGLISH adventurers, having hitherto confined their efforts to visiting foreign and remote regions, and satisfied with present discovery and traffic, had made no attempt to form new settlements. Sir Humphry Gilbert, a gentleman of ingenuity and learning, enthusiastic for discovery, proposed to conduct a colony to America; and, having applied to the queen, obtained the first charter for a colonial establishment.ⁿ The charter authorized him to discover and take possession of all remote and barbarous lands unoccupied by any christian prince and people; vested in him and his heirs the property of the soil of such countries, with the legislative power, and the civil and criminal jurisdiction over those who should settle in the new plantations. The laws and their administration were to be conformable to the polity of England, on which the new colony was still to depend. Arbitrary as the powers thus confirmed were, such was the spirit of adventure now prevalent, that many agreed to conform to the conditions, and became Gilbert's associates. In his undertaking he was assisted and accompanied by his half brother Walter Raleigh, afterwards so renowned in political and literary history. Two expeditions which Gilbert conducted to Newfoundland and cape Breton ended disastrously. In the last, the leader himself perished. The undaunted spirit of Raleigh, not disappointed by this miscarriage, projected a new scheme of colonization. After procuring a similar charter from the queen, adopting his brother's ideas, but avoiding his errors, he resolved to steer a much more southern course, and also to send trusty officers to explore the country, before he should attempt a settlement. On their return they reported, that they had found in southern latitudes a most beautiful country, distinguished for fertility of soil, and mildness of climate; of which they had taken possession in her majesty's name, and called it Virginia, as a memorial that this happy discovery had been made under a virgin queen. Raleigh accordingly fitted out a squadron, and planted in that country the first

Walter
Raleigh.

ⁿ Robertson's posthumous America, p. 33.

colony ever established by Englishmen. The new colonists, however, in the eagerness of their search after the precious mines with which they supposed the new world in every part to abound, neglected the means of subsistence. Being on the point of perishing with famine, they returned to England. Raleigh made a second attempt to establish a colony; but he and other patrons of the settlement being called to defend their country against the invasion of Philip, this colony also failed. Vigorous, beneficial, and glorious as the administration of Elizabeth proved, it was not very favourable to schemes of doubtful and contingent advantage, or to what in modern mercantile language are called speculations; and plans of new establishments were in her reign carried on at the expense and risk of individuals. Besides, the wisdom and felicity of her internal government promoted agriculture,* manufactures, commerce, the means of subsistence, convenience, and comfort; and as it bestowed security on her subjects for the enjoyment of their manifold advantages, was not favourable to emigration. But though the first attempts to plant colonies were unsuccessful, the spirit of colonization excited in the reign of Elizabeth, continuing to prevail and increase afterwards, produced in colonies most abundant sources of British opulence and power. Eager as Elizabeth was for the encouragement and extension of trade, in order to cherish it in its infant state, she granted many monopolies; which, though probably necessary at the time, would, if they had continued, have proved destructive to that commerce they were intended to promote.^p The principal companies

Wise internal policy of the queen.

* A law was made in the fifth of Elizabeth, allowing for the first time the exportation of corn. To this enactment, Camden imputes the great improvement of agriculture.

p Our great commercial philosopher in a few words states the reasons for monopolies so clearly and strongly, and illustrates them by such apposite analogies, as to present at one view the extent and bounds which policy allows and prescribes to trading corporations. "When," says he, "a company of merchants undertake, at their own risk and expense to establish a new trade with some remote and barbarous nation, it may not be unreasonable to incorporate them into a joint stock company, and to grant them, in case of their success, a monopoly of the trade for a certain number of years. It is the easiest and most natural way in which the state can recompence them for hazarding a dangerous and extensive experiment, of which the public is afterwards to reap the benefit. A temporary monopoly of this kind may be vindicated upon the same principles upon which a like monopoly of a new machine is granted to its inventor, and that of a new book to its author; but upon the expiration of the term, the monopoly ought certainly to be determined." *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 144.

Commer-
cial com-
panies.

East India
company.

established by Elizabeth, were the Russian and the Turkish, and one which was destined far to surpass either in the momentous interests that it involved. Near the close of this long and illustrious reign, John Lancaster proposing to measure part of the course of sir Francis Drake, undertook a trading expedition to India. A charter was granted to the adventurers at whose expense the enterprise was undertaken, and they were formed into a corporation, under the name of the East India Company. The first attempt by Englishmen to participate in the trade of India being eminently successful, encouraged future adventurers. Thus the reign of this princess very strongly and effectually promoted agriculture, internal and foreign trade, maritime skill and enterprise, the means of subsisting, enriching, and aggrandizing the people intrusted to her care.

UNDER this extraordinary personage, nautical effort was not merely encouraged as the means of opulence, but of defence, of security, and of power. France, at this time engaged in intestine wars by the bigoted frenzy of furious religionists, and with all her resources possessing scarcely any commerce, was totally deficient in naval force. Philip, who included in his dominions the experienced sailors of the Low Countries and of Italy; the Spaniards, who from their intercourse with the new world were inured to nautical exertion and enterprise; and by recent usurpation, the Portuguese, who far surpassed all their neighbours in naval fame, appeared undoubted master of the ocean, and able to crush at a blow every opponent. This mighty engine, which, if moved and directed by wisdom and skill, would have been so efficient and formidable, in the hands of bigotry, superstition and impolicy, was at once enormous and inert. Part, indeed, of the machine, torn from the rest by tyranny, recoiled upon its former owner. Philip's civil and ecclesiastical despotism rendered the bold and skilful sailors of the Low Countries eagerly hostile to a power which attempted to overwhelm their rights and liberties. The gloomy zealot, enraged against Elizabeth for protecting her own religion and that of her people against his superstition; the imperious tyrant enraged against Elizabeth as the protector of freemen who durst vindicate their own rights, though contrary to a

despot's will ; meditated a blow, by which he expected to subjugate England, and to involve the country and its allies in civil and religious thralldom. For this purpose he equipped the Armada, which he vainly fancied and denominated Invincible. Elizabeth, in preparing and strengthening a navy, had not been guided solely by the general policy which dictated maritime force as the means of defence in insular situation ; but having discovered the purposes, motives, and plans of her most potent neighbour and rival, she had recently directed her peculiar attention to the increase of a fleet. In this pursuit, she was seconded by the efforts of her subjects, who were inspired with that patriotic loyalty, which the wisdom and virtues of a sovereign exerted for the public good, choosing ministers and other executorial officers according to their fitness to promote the national welfare, and actually effecting the ease and happiness of the people, never fail to produce among Englishmen. These dispositions, guided by private and individual skill, combining with armaments prepared by her foresight and headed by commanders selected by her sagacity, discomfited the operose equipment of her foe. From that time, England became mistress of the ocean ; her sailors thenceforward conceived themselves superior to those of all other nations. The conception powerfully contributed to the attainment of reality. Since that time, defeat, disaster, and disgrace, have never failed to follow those who have presumed to brave England on her own element. The same reign witnessed the first regular formation of an English navy, and its supremacy over all other naval powers. So eminently and decidedly successful in defensive effort, the English undertook repeated expeditions to the coasts of their enemies ; and though the issue of them was not always, it was generally prosperous. Spain was humbled, and England was exalted.

Spanish
Armada.

Eliza-
beth's wis-
dom and
magnani-
mity.

Loyal and
patriotic
enthusiasm
of her sub-
jects.

Armada
discomfit-
ed.

Hencefor-
ward
English
navy par-
amount.

RESPECTING foreign politics, Elizabeth was placed in a situation of infinitely greater difficulty than her father, or any of her predecessors. Religious bigotry was the chief spring which moved the most powerful princes on the continent ; their very ambition was subservient and instrumental to their theological fanaticism. France, instead of watching the motions and repressing the en-

Continen-
tal policy
of Eliza-
beth.

Supports
the inde-
pendence
of Europe.

croachments of the house of Austria, devoted her principal attention to the persecution of heretics, and joined in all the dark and nefarious designs of the pope, Spain, and the emperor. According to the sentiments and opinions of popish sovereigns and people, Elizabeth was not the rightful sovereign of England, because she was not approved of by an Italian priest. The legitimate successor to the crown, according to popish interpretation, was the queen of Scotland, a bigoted catholic, and a near relation of the ablest and most ferocious champion of the catholic league. Elizabeth was not, like her father, so situated, as to trim the balance between the rival potentates of France and Austria, and to turn the scale according to her judgment or choice. Much more difficult was her part, to secure the independence of her people, and of others whose interests were closely connected with theirs, against a general confederacy of priests and arbitrary princes, of bigotry and despotism, bandied in atrocious barbarity, in order to disseminate articles of theological belief. In the time of Henry VIII. England showed she could maintain the balance of power. Under Elizabeth, in preserving that balance, England assumed the character which she has, except in the reigns of the Stuarts, ever since maintained, of supporting the rights and independence of Europe against the powerful disturbers of its tranquillity. Such was the relation in which Elizabeth stood to foreign countries. Too vigorous in understanding and profound in wisdom to be a bigot, or to estimate modes of faith by any other test than their conduciveness to private and public welfare, in her choice of religion she was guided by prudent policy, founded in her own situation, and the sentiments and interests of the greater part of her people.^q It was expedient that she should be at the head of the protestants. Fortunately, in the two countries, more contiguous to her kingdom, and of which the sovereigns, both from joint and separate motives, were well disposed to give her disturbance, the number of protestants was very great; so as in France to afford sufficient employment to the popish combination at home, and in Scotland to be fully established, and totally

^q See Hume's account of Elizabeth's reasons for reestablishing the protestant religion, vol. v. p. 5.

paramount to the party which from theological sympathy was favoured by the sovereign. So thoroughly wise and prudent was Elizabeth, that for twenty-nine years she discomfited all the designs and conspiracies of popish devotees against her person and kingdom; supported the protestants in France, Germany, and the Low Countries; and furious, implacable, and savage, as was the hatred of the confederate princes to every supporter of the protestant cause, and above all to Elizabeth, she never involved herself in hostilities; but when the aggressive invasion of Philip rendered war unavoidable, she showed that the same wisdom and strength of mind which had maintained peace so beneficial to rising industry and commerce, could carry on war with effect when necessary for the security of her country. In her latter years, policy as well as kindred genius, and wisdom allied her to the illustrious Henry of France. The catholic league being now broken, and the power of Philip reduced, there being no longer a popish pretender to the crown, the chief difficulties of both her internal and foreign relations ceased; and the queen and country, which in such trying circumstances had arisen to a pitch of high importance, were regarded by foreign states with an admiration that never before had been so universally bestowed upon the efforts of England.

Security
the object
of Elizabeth's
war.

In her ecclesiastical conduct and establishments, Elizabeth, guided by policy, and not stimulated by bigotry, was usually moderate, but on certain occasions led to acts of intolerance. As long as the Roman catholics confined themselves to their own theological doctrines, and did not disturb her government, she permitted them to enjoy their opinions without molestation; but when she found them engaged in conspiracies against her life, she and her parliament enacted very severe laws respecting a system of faith producing plots for treason and assassination. These laws, though intended chiefly to operate for the discouragement of popery, afterwards applied to other dissenters from the established church. A sect was now rising in England, composed of those who thought the reform as established by Edward and restored by Elizabeth inadequate to the corruptions of the church, and who, professing to seek a greater degree of purity, were

Ecclesiastical
policy
and establishments.

Puritans. thence called Puritans. Beginning to seek civil as well as ecclesiastical liberty, they were by no means agreeable to Elizabeth, whose notions of kingly prerogative, being formed when the power of the crown, from the depression of the aristocracy and before the elevation of the commons, was so predominant, were extremely lofty. For the repression of puritanical doctrines, she established the court of ecclesiastical commission; a most arbitrary tribunal, which, in the powers vested, the jurisdiction conferred, the modes of process established, and the punishments prescribed, was not less iniquitous than the popish inquisition, though, from the wise moderation of Elizabeth, much more mildly exercised than by a Philip or an Alva.

Elizabeth's reign eventually friendly to liberty.

In her government, Elizabeth, like all the princes of the house of Tudor, was extremely absolute. A spirit of liberty, however, had begun to rise, which, though fostered by the wise and beneficial conduct of Elizabeth, was certainly not intended by her to be cherished. The industry and enterprise which she encouraged and promoted, diffused property among the commons; that property nourished independence, and joined with advancing reason and knowledge in disseminating a spirit of freedom. The government, however, of the queen, though, impetuous, yet generally lenient, did not irritate this new spirit by particular acts of oppression, tyranny, or cruelty. Her conduct, steadily and wisely directed to the interests of her people, rendered her extremely popular. Her manners, engaging and insinuating, increased the attachment of her people. From her character and situation, the greater number of her subjects considered her welfare as identified with their own. The most strenuous votaries of liberty were the most inimical to popery, against the approaches of which they considered Elizabeth as the strongest bulwark. From attachment to a sovereign in whom they experienced so many excellencies, and also from awe of so very resolute and intrepid a character, they yielded a submission to the authority of Elizabeth, which they by no means thought due to the mandates of kingly power.

Popular manners and personal authority.

Literature under Elizabeth.

THE literature which Elizabeth encouraged, tended also to promote the spirit of freedom. The writers of

Greece and Rome, inculcating so strongly and impressively the principles and sentiments of liberty, were now very generally read among the higher and middling ranks. Genius, no longer fettered by priestly enactments, soared aloft; and though not immediately directed to political discussion, yet by enlightening and invigorating men's minds, prepared them for just notions respecting their rights, and bold and manly conduct in asserting their liberties. The reign of Elizabeth, though like her father's manifestly arbitrary, has in its ultimate tendency and effects, proved favourable to freedom. Thus in the various constituents of internal prosperity and happiness, and in estimation and importance among foreign powers, England never made such advances as under the very long but much more glorious reign of Elizabeth. Considered as a rational being, placed in authority and intrusted with the government of mankind, examined according to the circumstances of her situation, the duties required, her discharge of those duties, and the result in the condition in which she FOUND AND LEFT her subjects, (the true criterion of a ruler's ability or weakness as a SOVEREIGN,^r no prince that ever filled a throne surpassed Elizabeth.

Result of
this glorious
reign.

DIFFERENT as was the character of James from that of his illustrious predecessor, his reign was in many respects conducive to industry, commerce, and the internal prosperity of the kingdom, though it generated disputes which were eventually productive of the most fatal conclusions. Endued with scholastic learning and pedantry, fitter for being a Latin lecturer on controversial divinity in a sequestered college, than for being the ruler of a great, bold, and enterprising nation, James possessed two qualities often resulting from literary seclusion: he was extremely indolent, and extremely timid; and therefore a lover of peace. The pursuits of his subjects rendered his pacific character beneficial.

James I.

THE spirit of industry, adventure, and trade, being uninterrupted by foreign wars, greatly increased in the

Reign beneficial to
national
prosperity

^r This is the light in which the expanded mind of Hume considers our illustrious queen; disregarding such foibles, as, though they might mark a part of her character, did not interfere with her administration of affairs, powerful, constant, and successful promotion of the public good.

reign of James. The traffic with the East Indies was now entirely established, the stock of the company was considerably enlarged, and its profits became every year more extensive. The trade of Turkey was advantageous; a lucrative commerce was opened with Spain, and the mercantile intercourse with Russia and other northern countries increased in productiveness. The export trade greatly surpassed the import, which, though no certain criterion of a flourishing commerce,^a proved that English commodities were numerous and valuable. James perceived the hurtful tendency of monopolies, and considerably lessened their number and importance. Manufactures advanced in a similar proportion, and especially woollen commodities. The king eagerly promoted English cloths, and laboured to prevent the exportation of raw materials, to be manufactured in foreign countries for English consumption.^t

Plantation
of colonies.

In a commercial view, this reign was chiefly distinguished by the colonies which were planted, and established on principles the most beneficial of any recorded in the history of colonization. The pacific disposition and conduct of James were favourable to new plantations. The planters were not interrupted in their settlements by foreign enemies, and the force sent for their establishment was not obliged to be recalled for the defence of the mother country. Bold and enterprising adventurers, who languished in inaction during the peace, found in colonial projects a new field for active exertion. A most strenuous promoter of plantations was Richard Hackluyt, eminent for commercial and nautical knowledge. That he might stimulate his countrymen to new efforts, this experienced navigator published a collection of voyages and discoveries made by Englishmen: he comprehended the proper objects of inquiry and research concerning new countries, understood the fresh information that arrived, and saw to what purpose it might be most usefully applied. In the last year of Elizabeth, by Hackluyt's suggestion, Gosnold undertook a voyage to America, and pursued a direct and middle course between the northern route of sir

^a See *Wealth of Nations*; and the marquis of Lansdown's speech on the commercial treaty with France, in answering bishop Watson. ^t Hume, vol. v. p. 46. and 185.

Humphrey Gilbert, and the southern circuit of sir Walter Raleigh. Gosnold having reached a country called Massachusetts Bay, coasted to the southwest, landed on the continent, traded with its inhabitants, and having ascertained the fertility of the country, returned to England. Having learned these particulars, he combined them with what was before known concerning Virginia; and, after consulting with other men of ability and enterprise, proposed an association for establishing colonies in America. The king, being petitioned, sanctioned the project with his authority. Informed of the extent, and in some degree of the value, of the American lands, he divided into two districts the portion of the continent which he intended to plant: the first to be called, the South Colony of Virginia; the second the North Colony of New England. The projected plantations were intrusted to the care of exclusive companies; a system conducive to the protection of infant colonies; though adverse to the prosperity of settlements arrived at mature vigour. Associated under the name of the London Company, Hackluyt and others received a grant of lands, and were authorized to settle a colony in Virginia. Several gentlemen and merchants of the west of England, incorporated under the name of the Plymouth Company, obtained a similar grant and authority for colonising New England. On each were bestowed charters, which, though inconsistent with the enlightened and generous spirit of liberty that since has prevailed in this country, were by no means deficient in security to property, and encouragement to industry. The southern colony was first established in the early part of James's reign. Having left their country before the disputes between kingly prerogative and popular privilege were publicly agitated, the new planters carried with them notions, opinions and sentiments, favourable to the church and monarchy, and transmitted them to their posterity.

THE first attempt to colonise the north proved unsuccessful, nor was the settlement finally effected till near the end of the reign, when great dissensions began to prevail. The planters of New England were chiefly men, who, discontented with the established church and monarchy, sought for freedom in the wilds of America. Afterwards receiv-

Germes of
republicanism in
New England.

ing accessions of voluntary exiles from the persecutions of narrow and impolitic bigotry, they formed a colony, which was inimical to kings and bishops, and preserved that character to the present age.

DIFFERING in pursuit from the Spanish conquerors of the New World, the English settlers sought and acquired property, not from the bowels of the earth, but from the surface of the soil, and the bounties of the ocean liberally rewarded the efforts of active and enterprising industry. The spirit of their institutions joined with the productiveness of their situation in rapidly promoting colonial prosperity.

Settlement
of Ireland.

To the policy of James, the nation is indebted for the regulation of Ireland. His measures amended and secured the tenure of property, established the administration of justice, stimulated industry and the arts; and constituted an important branch in the progressive improvement of the British dominions.

Continental
policy
of James,
timid, but
not hurtful.

In his intercourse with foreign nations, this king was far from preserving to his country that weight and consideration which his predecessors had acquired. Though the feeble and inactive hands of the English sovereign were not qualified to hold the balance of Europe, yet the state of affairs rendered his inertness safe to his own country, and not injurious to the independence of other nations.

Favoured
by the state
of Europe.

Henry IV. had harmonized his kingdom, lately so discordant; and turned to arts and industry those bold and active spirits that had been recently actuated by religious frenzy, and rendered France a sufficient counterpoise for the unwieldy greatness of Spain. After the death of her renowned monarch, from her own strength, and the ability of her minister, she fully maintained her weight in the scale. The conquest of the Palatinate, deemed so disgraceful to James, was too distant an event to affect the political interests of England, and the forbearance of the king might be justified upon principles of prudent policy. But as his motives were presumed to be his constitutional and habitual indolence and timidity, his conduct was exposed to mortifying contempt. He almost daily was trying treaties to obtain the reestablishment of the elector, but without displaying that firmness and force which most

effectually promote English negotiations for repressing ambition.

In the political government of his kingdom several errors of the understanding, and weaknesses rather than vices of the heart, combined with the circumstances of the times, and produced dissatisfaction and discontent very troublesome to himself, and fatal to his son. James entertained lofty ideas of kingly prerogative, totally incompatible with the real purpose of any delegated trust, and much beyond the limits prescribed by our fundamental laws, but perfectly conformable to the practice of the house of Tudor. He did not perceive the great difference of the case, both as to the characters of the princes, and the opinion and power of the subjects. The Tudors were more fitted to secure submission by cool, stern, and determined policy; to terrify resistance by energetic, though capricious and violent command; or to exact obedience, and ensure compliance, through the awe, veneration, and attachment entertained by subjects for the magnanimity, wisdom, and patriotism of the sovereign. A great class of men had now arisen, not only disposed, but able to question any branch of the asserted prerogative, which they considered as unnecessary or injurious to the only legitimate object of government. In his disposition and administration James was neither tyrannical nor imperious, but delighting in discourse and speculative dissertation, he talked much more about the divine right of kings, than all the princes of the house of Tudor, who had contented themselves with exercising absolute dominion without searching into political metaphysics. James provoked and accelerated discussions about prerogative, to which the commons were already sufficiently prone, and which his indolent, irresolute, and timid character farther encouraged. The king's theology concurred with his political sentiments in promoting discontent. From the study of polemic divinity, he was, the sincere votary of the high church doctrines, and a zealous advocate of hierarchy. The strenuous friends of liberty were inimical to popery, which they accused the king of regarding too favourably. His refusal to reduce the power of the high commission court, whilst he granted every indulgence to catholics;

Lofty ideas
of prerogative.

unsuitable
to his
personal
character
and estimation,

and to the
growing
spirit of
liberty
among the
commons.

being construed into a predilection for the Romish doctrines, and a hatred of the puritans, exasperated the spirit of liberty, already so strong in the commons. Another feature in the king's character, by helping to disgust his subjects, conduced to the depression of the kingly name: his indiscreet and boundless attachment to frivolous and contemptible favourites; and the promotion of the minions of his childish fondness, to offices for which they were totally unfit. The people very naturally and reasonably concluded, that a person can prove no divine right to govern a kingdom, who showed himself so very deficient in wisdom, as in choosing a minister of state, to consider merely personal graces, and courtly manners. Contending with such a prince, the commons were both emboldened and empowered to show him, that absolute power had no longer subsisted in England; that they were prepared to vindicate the rights and liberties of freemen; and that his boasting claims would only challenge stronger confutation, and his eager but feeble opposition produce farther demands. Absurd and extravagant as their theological cant and pretensions might be, the puritans were hitherto actuated by an elevated and noble spirit of civil and political freedom, which every Briton who justly appreciates the blessings of the present constitution must acknowledge with veneration and gratitude. Their talents and conduct were well fitted for promoting the attainment of liberty; they proceeded cautiously and gradually, and enlarged their views, and systematized their plans, as their cause became popular and the opposite obnoxious. The king employed rash and violent letters and speeches, to which they opposed prudent, vigorous and decisive conduct. The course of contest produced the celebrated manifesto in which the commons of England first boldly, openly, and precisely declared, that the representatives of the people held certain liberties, franchises, and privileges, not as grants of the king, but as the rights of freeborn Englishmen. Though James expressed great rage against the contents and authors of this paper, yet he was afterwards obliged to court his parliament, to gratify them by passing several popular laws, and by his concessions to acknowledge

Disputes
between
the king
and commons.

that there was in the country a power fully equal to the king's, and arising from the strength of the people. The latter end of James's reign is a most important epoch in the constitutional history of England, as then first the commons proved their own force. The Commons ascertain their rights.

JAMES educated and formed his son, Charles, in the same political and theological sentiments and doctrines which he had himself maintained, professed, and inculcated. Notwithstanding his own experience of the change of public opinion and of political power, he had taken no pains to model the prince according to the present dispositions and character of the people whom he was destined to govern. Young Charles very naturally imbibed his father's instructions, and conceived the kingly prerogative to be such as James represented and argued, and as Elizabeth had exercised. Sincere in his profession, this prince was a zealous votary of the high church; directed in his opinions and doctrines by prelates, and especially by Laud, he was confirmed in his notions of the divine right of kings, and the inseparable connexion between episcopacy and monarchy. With such principles and sentiments, so very contrary to those of a great, powerful, and increasing body of his countrymen, on the death of his father, Charles mounted the throne. Charles I. treads in his father's steps. A sincere and zealous church-man.

THE unlimited power of Buckingham, James's minion, having overborne the pacific maxims of the king, and involved him in hostilities with Spain, Charles at his accession found himself engaged in a war. As the contest was professedly popular, he reasonably expected the support of his people and parliament; but the supplies voted were very inadequate to the expenses requisite for the arduous undertaking. The leaders of the commons determined to persevere in the establishment of a free constitution, considered the necessities of the prince as conducive to their purpose, and resolved to grant no subsidies without a redress of grievances, and concessions favourable to civil liberty. Amiable and affectionate, Charles was warm and steady in his attachments, though not proportionably judicious in the selection of objects. Thence he had maintained Buckingham in the high favour and trust little deserved by his talents and virtues, and obnoxious to the parliament Claims and views of the commons.

and public. He not only protected this minister against the just resentment of the commons, but, instigated by his councils, he adopted iniquitous measures for extorting loans, and invading the property of Englishmen without their own consent. A series of acts, flagrantly violating the privileges of Englishmen, alarmed and roused the commons.

Petition of rights.

OPPOSING firm and profound wisdom to the desultory and illegal oppression of the court, their strong, discriminating, and bold remonstrance procured, in the petition of right, a demarkation of the limits by which liberty and property were secured. Notwithstanding the king's engagement, incurred by his consent to the petition of right, he for many years continued regularly and systematically to transgress the established laws of England; to imprison, fine, and corporally punish men, without the judgment of their peers; to deprive them of their property, and compel them to pay subsidies without the consent of their representatives; and by manifold unconstitutional, lawless, and tyrannical acts, to oppress his subjects.* Virtuous in his domestic and private life, Charles, in relation to his kingdom, disregarded justice, and the rights of the people, as much as if he had been wicked and tyrannical.

Illegal and unconstitutional violations.

Chief instruments of oppression, the star chamber, and high court of commission.

His chief instruments of oppression were the star chamber, which subjected liberty and property to the privy council, instead of the peers of the accused; and the high court of commission, subjecting liberty, property, and life, to an arbitrary body, also not constituted of the defendant's peers. Though these tribunals subsisted in the time of Elizabeth, they were not only contrary to the great charter and other fundamental laws of England, but totally inconsistent with the principal clauses of the petition of right, as admitted by Charles himself. The chief agents in this oppressive violation of the constitution were Strafford and Laud. The vigorous ability and stern imperiousness of the one, and the narrow bigotry and priestly tyranny of the other, instigating the pliant Charles, produced iniquitous judgments and punishments, and unconstitutionally extorted money by arbitrary violence, but eventually hastened the vindication of rightful liberty.

Strafford and Laud.

* See Hume's History, vol. v. chap. 52.

Even the frivolous mummery of Laud's innovating ceremonies, though in itself merely laughable, yet indicating a predilection for popery, added to the alarm of the reforming party, and their impatience under the lawless acts of this domineering ecclesiastic.⁷

The usurpations of Charles and his ministers were destined to have a speedy end. Goaded by oppression, liberty rushed forward with an overpowering force. Hampden, with manly breast resisting exaction unauthorized by the law, roused the votaries of freedom through the nation. Charles's unbounded love of liturgy, excited from the north fresh enemies to his administration. Necessitated to call a parliament, the unhappy prince found that the members brought with them a much stronger spirit of opposition and resistance than had prevailed among their predecessors. In their very first acts they boldly showed, that the commons of England were determined not only to restrain, but to abolish iniquitous tribunals, however sanctioned by precedent; to punish tyrannical violators of the rights of the people, however supported by court favour; and to enforce the redress of grievances in church and state. So far as these votaries of freedom intended to limit the boundaries of kingly power according to its legitimate object, the public good, and to prevent a repetition of tyranny, their purpose was beneficent, patriotic, and meritorious. The legislative and political transactions of this memorable parliament, during the first period of its operations, entitle its members to the highest praise and gratitude from the lovers of liberty, and all the subjects of the British constitution. These intrepid votaries of freedom, these resolute opponents of kingly and priestly tyranny, saved their country from civil and ecclesiastical thralldom, which Charles's priests and ministers were so rapidly imposing. Had it not been for them, England, like France, would have been a simple despotism, subjecting the rights and happiness of a whole people to the arbitrary will and caprice of a single individual.

Series of oppression rouses resistance.

Hampden.

Meeting of parliament.

Claims of the commons.

First proceedings of a bold and manly assertion of their rights.

⁷ See Hume's account of the consecration of St. Catharine's church, by Land, vol. v. p. 275.

Spirit of
freedom
becomes
excessive.

Commons
turbulent
and repub-
lican.

Tyranni-
cal prose-
cutions of
Strafford
and Laud.

With this generous zeal for liberty, was joined a repugnance to all authority, however salutary and expedient; a spirit of democratical and puritanical enthusiasm, seeking to level all ranks and distinctions, however necessary to the stability and well-being of society. Actuated by these principles and sentiments, the opponents of the king did not rest satisfied with measures and acts which restrained the monarchical and clerical power from being oppressive and tyrannical. No sooner had they accomplished that important and valuable purpose, than they proceeded to reductions preventing them from being active, efficient, and useful; and after their first year, the parliament (especially the commons) became turbulent and republican. In resisting ship money, abolishing the star chamber and high court of commission, circumscribing executive power within the bounds of law and the rights and welfare of the people, the commons were the protecting guardians of British liberty; but when, in their second year, they sought and attempted to grasp the chief provinces of the executorial power, they became enemies of the constitution. In their judicial proceedings, the popular leaders, patriotically and justly attacked the counsellors and ministers of tyranny; but in the mode of prosecuting and trying Strafford and Laud, the accusers charging, and the judges admitting, acts to be treason, which were not treason by the law of the land, both commons and peers were guilty of much greater and more irreparable tyranny, than any against which they had so properly and strongly remonstrated. From their meeting in 1640 to the close of 1641, they vindicated and secured the constitutional and beneficial rights, privileges, and liberties of English subjects: in 1642, they attacked no less constitutional and beneficial powers delegated for the national good to an English king; and demonstrated how natural it is for wise and able men, ardent in pursuit of an object good within certain bounds, to transgress those limits; and after having begun with what was right, useful, and even necessary, to end in what is wrong, hurtful, and pernicious. Not only the particular acts, but the general conduct of the king, during the first fourteen years of his reign, recoiled dreadfully on himself, and showed how dangerous it is for the

chief executive magistrate of a free people, by galling oppression, to drive liberty to energetic resistance.

THE civil wars, and their dismal catastrophe in regicide, democratic anarchy, and military despotism, manifest the direful effects of popular and prevalent enthusiasm, even though it may have originated in the noble spirit of liberty. Lawless oppression drove a free, bold, and generous people, to defensive efforts, at first lawful and laudable.* In their progress, their measures became aggressive, and in their success, levelled monarchy with the dust; and instead of rational and modified liberty, established a boundless license, terminated by military despotism.

Civil wars. Democratic spirit destroys church and monarchy; and terminates in regicide and military despotism.

LEFT to private enterprise, commerce increased and flourished more than at any former period. The trade to the East Indies and to Guinea became very considerable. The commerce to Turkey and the Mediterranean, was also greatly enlarged. With Spain, inimical to Holland, England now enjoyed almost the sole traffic. Under the commonwealth, the prevalence of republican principles engaged country gentlemen to bind their sons apprentices to merchants, and commerce has ever since been more honourable in England than in any other European kingdom. Trade received great interruption from the civil wars; but under the republic and the protectorate, it revived with augmented vigour. The war with the states general, carried on with such energy, distressed the commerce of the Dutch, and promoted the trade of England, their only formidable commercial rival. The exclusive companies, which formerly confined trade, were never expressly abolished by any ordinance of parliament, during the commonwealth; but as men paid no regard to the prerogative, whence the charters of these companies were derived, the monopoly was gradually invaded, and commerce increased by the increase of liberty.^a

Advance of commerce and navigation under Charles.

^z This opinion is sanctioned by the authority of Mr. Hume, vol. iv. p. 17. Mr. Hume, indeed, though called an apologist for the Stuarts, merely states their conduct to be natural, without vindicating it as just, or entitled to the submissive acquiescence of their subjects. See the history of those reigns, passim: on the other hand, while he exposes the evils of political fanaticism, he allows the puritans to be the saviours of English liberty.

^a See Hume's History of England, vol. vi. p. 333.

Progress
of the colo-
nies Virgi-
nia.

THE colonies also now afforded a considerable vent for English merchandise. Virginia, strictly subject to an exclusive corporation, experienced the various impediments necessarily resulting from the selfish and monopolizing views of such companies; but by the advantage of its soil and climate triumphed over these obstacles. Its colonists found it peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of tobacco, a plant for which the relish was becoming very general throughout Europe. The Virginians rendered this their staple commodity. Having purchased some negroes from a Dutch ship, which visited them from the coast of Guinea, they found the natives of the torrid zone, so much more capable of enduring fatigue under a sultry climate than Europeans, that they afterwards increased their number by continual importation.

New Eng-
land.

NEW ENGLAND received in the time of Charles I. numerous additions of emigrants, and increased in population and power. Paying little regard to the royal charter, by which they were first associated, these planters considered themselves as a society voluntarily united; and choosing a constitution framed on the model of England, they formed four colonies into confederated states, and asserted that they should be bound by no laws to which they themselves did not assent, and subject to no taxes imposed in an assembly wherein they were not represented. Within a few years of their plantation, the colonists of New England manifested the same spirit, and vindicated the same rights, which a century and a half afterwards produced a refusal of British taxation, and independence on the British crown. The coincidence of their sentiments with those of the English republicans, rendered the New Englanders particularly favoured under the commonwealth. Unfettered in their industry and pursuits, they grew in internal prosperity and strength, and promoted the trade and navigation of the mother country. To secure to Britain the commerce of her rising colonies, as well as to extend her general trade, nautical exertions, and naval power, was the great object of the navigation act, the most important and memorable of commercial statutes. This act, and subsequent regulations, originating in the same principle, but comprehending

Navigation
act.

greater varieties of articles and details, secured to England an exclusive commerce with her colonies ; and formed and methodized the monopoly into a regular and complete system. It farther, in imposing a necessity of employing British sailors, very powerfully increased our best means of security and defence. With trade, the naval force of the kingdom improved. The ship money, so illegally levied by Charles, was applied to the professed purpose. The English fleet in his time was powerful, though not employed in war. Cromwell, energetic and efficient in every object which he pursued, had a navy, as well as an army, superior to all his enemies.

DURING the reigns of both James and Charles, England appeared to have almost totally forgotten the affairs of the continent, though requiring her watchful attention. Spain, under a succession of weak princes and incapable ministers, was fast declining in power. The German branch of the house of Austria was reduced and humiliated by the heroic Gustavus, and his gallant Swedes. The bold, vigorous, and intrepid Richelieu, operating upon the French character, was fast raising his country in power and energy. The great objects of that celebrated minister were, to render the monarchy internally and externally efficient. He proposed to effect these purposes, by subduing the Hugonots, frequently rebels against the established government ; by humbling the princes and nobles, who often opposed the power of the crown ; and by curbing the house of Austria, the chief enemy of French greatness. His consummate ability, directing the councils and efforts of his country, accomplished these objects. He conquered the protestants, disconcerted and overcame the grandees at home, and rendered France a monarchy entirely absolute. Abroad, he made very considerable progress in his scheme of humbling the house of Austria. In his time, France resumed her station, and was the most powerful empire on the continent. Cardinal Mazarine, succeeding Richelieu not only in his ministry but in his designs, discomfited the factious princes and nobles, and completed what Richelieu had so far advanced. Every year aggrandized France, and reduced the power of Spain and the emperor. The French generals and soldiers

State of
Europe:

Decline of
Spain, and
rise of
France.

Continental
policy of
Oliver
Cromwell.

acquired daily a greater ascendant over the Spaniards. Almost constantly victorious in a long war, and having detached from her rival, by revolt, dominions so productive, France was now become obviously and eminently preponderant in the scale of Europe. Such was her situation, when Oliver Cromwell became supreme director of English affairs. The character, efforts, and achievements of this renowned usurper commanded from foreign powers an admiration and deference bestowed on no English ruler since the time of Elizabeth. The belligerent nations saw, that England, directed and invigorated by Cromwell, could give victory to whatever party he chose to embrace. Each courted him with the most flattering and humble solicitations. If Cromwell had thoroughly understood and regarded the interests of his country, he would have supported the declining fortunes of Spain, against the dangerous ambition of France; and preserved the balance of power, on which the greatness and security of England so much depended. Allured, however, by the prospect of conquest and plunder among the Spanish settlements in the New World, and their ships on the intervening ocean, he threw his weight into the scale which was already preponderant, and contributed his powerful efforts to the exaltation of an empire most formidable to England.

English
literature
and sci-
ence.

FROM the time of the reformation, England had been eminently distinguished for the very highest efforts of literary genius. Among many writers more remarkable for sublimity and force than beauty and elegance, she had to boast a philosopher, whom Aristotle himself did not surpass in extent of knowledge and depth of investigation, in expansion of views, power of invention, and importance of discovery; an epic poet, whom Homer did not excel in sublimity, in pathos, and in force of character; a dramatic poet, whom not any; nor all the illustrious writers for the ancient stage, exceeded or equalled, in the knowledge or exhibition of man. A very considerable degree of learning was diffused, mingled with an incorrect taste, and tinged by either the superstitious bigotry, or the puritanical fanaticism, so generally prevalent. The predominant enthusiasm formed characters great and energetic,

but not pleasing and beneficial. Gloomy in its tenets, visionary in its fancies, austere in its observances, and dismal in its external appearance, it effected a very striking change in the national manners; but the alteration Manners. was only temporary. Doctrines and notions so totally inconsistent with vigorous and distinguishing good sense; sentiments so contrary to humanity and liberality; demeanour so repugnant to frankness, sincerity, and candour, could not be durable among Englishmen. The ferment of passion cooled; the frenzy of boundless innovation at length gave way to sober reason and experience. Men saw that the liberty which they had pursued beyond all useful limits, had terminated in slavery; they wished for the reestablishment of a monarchy properly circumscribed: favourable events seconded their desires, and with general acclamation Charles II. was restored to the throne of his Restoration. ancestors.

DURING the period between the restoration and the revolution, commerce and navigation rose to a pitch never before known in the annals of England. The two Dutch wars, by disturbing the trade of Holland, promoted the trade of this island; and the peace which prevailed during the rest of Charles's reign, however censurable on political grounds, and however unfavourable in its ultimate effects to the balance of power and independence of Europe, rapidly and powerfully contributed to the opulence of England. Both the fortunes and views of mercantile men were greatly enlarged. There were more merchants on London 'change at the end of this time, worth ten thousand pounds;^b than at the beginning, worth one thousand. With riches, ideas of accommodation and ornament diverged, manufactures were also very considerably improved. The general spirit of progressive industry was assisted by favourable incidents: the bigoted and tyrannical impolicy of Lewis IV. revoked the edict of Nantz, and drove from their country great numbers of his most useful subjects. He thereby furnished neighbouring states with arts and manufactures, and was peculiarly beneficial to England. The revenue rose with trade, its various branches were much more accurately regulated,

Rapid advance of commerce and navigation, under Charles and James.

^b See Mr Josiah Child's brief observations.

especially the customs,^c the species of tax most connected with commerce. The excise, tending so much more effectually to prevent frauds, was improved, the principles of finance began to be understood. Left chiefly to their own industry and skill, the established colonies increased in prosperity, and new settlements were either formed or acquired.

Extension
of coloniza-
tion.

NEW YORK and New Jersey were ceded by the Dutch; Pennsylvania and Carolina were planted; the first by quakers, who fled from the persecutions to which, by the intolerance of Charles's government, sectaries were exposed; the second, by persons well affected to the king. These carried to their respective settlements their political sentiments, and transmitted them to their posterity. The persecutions also drove other emigrants to those established colonies which coincided in their opinion. Thus, from New Hampshire to South Carolina, the American coast was colonised by England. The northern settlements cherished a spirit of republicanism, the southern a spirit of monarchical loyalty. Rapidly prospering under the system of policy that had been embraced, they were adding proportionably to both the export and import trade of the mother country. The shipping of England, in twenty-eight years, was more than doubled:^d James and Charles both vigorously promoted the increase of a navy, which, though misemployed by the corrupt and pernicious policy of Charles, yet showed itself efficient and fit for defending the country and her allies, whenever the sceptre of England should be placed in hands both able and disposed to wield it for the national good.

Arbitrary
conduct of
Charles.

CHARLES's principles and schemes of government were unquestionably inimical to civil and religious liberty; and though the bold and generous spirit of Englishmen prevented his designs from being fully accomplished, yet many of his acts, even in England, were extremely tyrannical. His arbitrary measures would have justified a much more forcible resistance than they met; and were, probably, by the recent experience only of the miseries of civil war, prevented from recoiling on himself. In

^c See *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 347.

^d See *Davenant's Discourse on the Public Revenues*.

Scotland, the constant and regular plan, as well as the particular acts of his government, merited and excited abhorrence. His iniquitous conduct, at once unjust and profligate, caused great but only temporary evil, while the remedies which it suggested proved a durable good. His attacks on the liberty of the subject raised bulwarks of defence of the strongest materials, to last many ages after he and his tyrannical efforts had perished for ever. His formation and increase of a standing army gave rise to a law, that a standing army was illegal, and made the national force dependent on the guardians of national liberty; unjust and unwarrantable imprisonments produced the habeas corpus act, which completed the security of personal liberty: the vigilant patriotism of the legislature abolished military tenures; the prerogatives of purveyance and pre-emption; and the capital punishment of heretics. It established triennial parliaments; and the test and corporation acts; and enacted many other laws which improved the security of liberty and property.

Excite the patriotism of parliament to many salutary and important laws;

HOSTILE as was Charles to the freedom and rights of the people, yet in his reign the constitution of England, in its progressive state, arrived at mature vigour; the true balance between privilege and prerogative was established. By the LAW, now ascertained and fixed, the people had nearly as large a portion of liberty as was necessary to their security and happiness;^e though fresh restrictions were still wanting to ensure its operation, without interruption from the pretended prerogatives of arbitrary princes. The tyrannical proceedings of Charles formed the opponents of his pretensions into a firm, well compacted, and powerful body. By promulgating the doctrines of passive obedience, so contrary to the rights and liberties of Englishmen, to common sense, and to common feeling, the king, his ministers, and churchmen, united the supporters of opposite sentiments, under the appellation of whigs; a name important and venerable, while it signifies champions of constitutional freedom, without extending to invaders of the no less constitutional prerogatives of the crown. Carrying their opposition to the measures and designs of

and to the momentous improvement of the constitution.

Whigs.

^e See Blackstone's last chapter.

Danger of
premature
resistance.

Charles farther than prudence admitted, the friends of freedom, in their discomfiture, near the close of the reign, and the death of magnanimous patriots on the scaffold, left to future votaries of liberty a warning lesson of the danger of premature resistance, even in the best cause. The same principles which influenced the internal government of Charles, directed his foreign politics.

Profligate
and pernicious
continental
policy of
Charles.

Dangerous
greatness
of France.

LEWIS XIV. was absolute and unlimited sovereign of the extensive, well compacted, and fertile empire of France, peopled with inhabitants, eminently ingenious, industrious, and énergic. Ardent, violent, and excessive in every pursuit, his subjects were devoted to the will of their prince, and to the promotion of his glory. The downfall of the Spanish monarchy, and the triumphs of the French arms, so gratifying to the national pride, invigorated the military spirit of Frenchmen. Zealous attachment to their young monarch, and the desire of extending his greatness, stimulated and encouraged their farther efforts. The resources of the country were extensive and increasing; the armies were numerous, well disciplined, and commanded by consummate generals. The officers, in all the various ranks and gradations, were prepared for their profession by regular and systematic tuition, and thoroughly fitted for executing the plans of their commanders, by the skilful and masterly performance of every subordinate duty. Gay and dissipated in private life, they were in public service strict, vigilant, and efficient. Military stores abounded, and nothing was wanting to render the land force of France organized and formidable. The rising spirit of navigation and trade; the maritime opportunities; the example of their neighbours, so successful in acquiring opulence and strengthening security; stimulated France to naval effort. The extension of commerce and navy became grand objects of French policy, and made considerable advances. So situated in the youthful vigour of his life, enterprising, both ambitious and vain, desirous of power for ostentatious display as well as solid possession, Lewis had strong incitements to attack and disturb his neighbours. The enfeebled and exhausted princes of Austria were little able to oppose this potent monarch. The whole continent was

incapable of preserving the balance of power ; England only could hold the scale.

SKILFUL industry, possessing plenty of materials, desires peace : the result of industry, skill, and materials, is property. War may be necessary for security ; but on any other ground, must, to a commercial nation, be unwise. As prospective policy guards against circuitous, as well as direct aggression, it becomes the interest of an industrious and mercantile community to watch the progress of ambitious neighbours. Britain, flourishing and opulent, had no inducement to offensive war, since continental acquisition could add nothing to her commerce and riches ; but had frequently strong motives to resist the offensive wars of her neighbours, to preserve the balance of power, which if overturned, would endanger herself. The aggressive character of France, cooperating with her own circumstances and situation, necessarily imposed upon Britain, her most potent and efficient neighbour, the contrary character, of being for her own ultimate security the protector of continental independence. Such has been the relation in which from the reigns of Charles and of Lewis, the British and French empires have stood to each other, and to the rest of Europe. The arbitrary designs and profligate views of Charles, united in driving him to the treacherous and fatal policy of promoting, instead of opposing, the excessive power and boundless ambition of France. Through Lewis, he hoped to establish in England his favourite despotism and policy, the engine of civil slavery. From Lewis, he received the means of wallowing in debauchery : a king of England betrayed his country for bribes from the king of France, to be squandered on prostitutes, and worthless minions ! From a combination of motives, unconstitutional and profligate, Charles II. abandoned his duty to these realms, joined with their most dangerous enemy, attacked our protestant ally, and powerfully assisted in raising France to such a pitch of dangerous greatness.

AVOIDING the gloomy austerity of the puritans, and influenced by the example of the king and court, English manners now ran into the opposite extreme of licentiousness and profligacy. Many ingenious and able men fell into infidelity, immorality, and impiety, and infected the

State of
Britain re-
latively to
the conti-
nent.

Manners
and litera-
ture.

literature of the times. A relish for grossness and indecency mingled itself with composition the most witty, humorous, and impressive, especially dramatic productions. This alloy to very great literary excellence long continued, until progressive refinement and delicacy removed the abuse. Writers in the lighter kind of compositions, who designed to exhibit the manners of the times, and represent them truly, drew them much more minutely than was necessary ; and more favourably than they deserved. One writer, however though often chargeable with the indelicacy of the times, often hasty and incorrect, remains the third of English poets, and almost the first of English critics. In higher departments of intellectual effort, depending on general views of ethics and divinity, on the investigation and comprehension of physical phenomena and their laws, English genius rose to great and beneficial exertions ; talents and erudition supported natural theology, christianity, and the protestant faith ; and from these, inculcated religious and moral duty.^f In the more profound and abstruse studies of mathematics and natural philosophy, several sages attained very high eminence. One reaching the zenith of scientific discovery, invention and deduction, equalled the very deepest and wisest philosophers of all ages or countries.

James II. JAMES II. much inferior to his brother in talents, a zealous, ardent, and priest-ridden bigot, considered the supreme good of mankind to be a belief in the Romish faith. Imperious, tyrannical, and cruel, contrary to the most obvious observation of his own early and recent experience, this prince conceived that Englishmen would yield to any mandate which he, in the insolence of lawless sway, should dare to offer. Arbitrary power was principally desired by this infatuated and contemptible zealot, to make converts in theology. Neither, like his brother, treacherous or corrupt, though not without a sense of the national honour, nor a jealousy of the power of France, yet he sacrificed all considerations to his darling popery. His priests and his rituals, his masses and his mummeries, he preferred to the welfare of his people, and the security

Folly and
infatuation
of his con-
duct.

^f Barrow, Tillotson, and other eminent clergymen.

of his throne. Uniting against him tories, churchmen, parties and classes most zealous for monarchy, as well as whigs and votaries of liberty; his conduct was more fortunate for the country, than if less completely odious: it facilitated the success of our glorious deliverer. The very madness of this poor infatuated zealot was extremely beneficial to his country, by withdrawing from him all confidence and support, and effecting a bloodless revolution, in driving him from a throne, which he was totally unqualified to fill. His conduct brought the question between liberty and prerogative to a crisis; it showed English kings, that by abusing, for arbitrary and iniquitous purposes, powers vested in them by the constitution to promote the public good, they soon should have no prerogative to exercise.

Cause and principle of the revolution.

NECESSITY compelled a deviation from the rules of hereditary succession to the throne of England; the same necessity that dictated the exception, defined its bounds. The disqualification of James had arisen from his arbitrary principles and conduct, chiefly originating in popish doctrines, and exercised to promote popish notions and government. The next protestant successors not only presumed, but known to be the enemies of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, were substituted, on their agreeing to conditions necessary for the security of liberty and religion.

Extent and bounds of the change in the succession.

THE revolution having been thus produced, and the terms prescribed on which the new sovereign was to reign, foreign politics became the most urgent consideration. The overgrown power of Lewis rendered a confederation of other states necessary for their joint and separate security. Having heroically defended and protected his country from the unprovoked invasion and usurping ambition of Lewis, William bent the principal force of his genius to the repression of France. Much less efficacious in power, and less splendid in character, than the monarch of Paris, the stadtholder of the Hague had a more solid, forcible, and inventive genius, creating and acquiring resources that rendered him ultimately equal to his foe. By delivering his own country from impending thralldom to France, William was enabled afterwards to effect the delivery of England. His successful accomplishment of this momen-

William III.

Confederacy
against
France for
the security
and independence
of Europe.

French
navy,

crushed at
La Hogue.

Character
of William's
continental
war.

tous object, produced the adoption by England of that system of foreign policy which the state of Europe required. Blamable as were Charles and James in so many parts of their administration, yet they had both applied with great vigour and effect to the increase of the navy, and left to a successor, seeking the real interest of his kingdom, a formidable engine to be employed against the friend and ally of their mischievous counsels. Lewis had acquired a considerable naval force, and was not without the hopes that France would obtain by sea the same supremacy which she had established by land. Some partial successes in the beginning of the war against England, encouraged this expectation. But at length, exerting the full force of her fleet, England, at La Hogue, crushed the navy of France; and again taught her enemies that she was still to be mistress of the ocean. During the rest of the war, though detached ships might be troublesome and vexatious, no French fleet was powerful or formidable. The army which Charles and James had levied and maintained for wicked ends, under the guidance of William, was conducive to salutary purposes. Inspired by the national spirit which supported the protestant asserters of their rights and liberty against the popish tyrant, they performed feats of magnanimous valour^g and discomfited all the invading projects of the deposed tyrant. They could not prevent him from perpetrating horrid cruelties, but they hindered his blood-thirsty murders from promoting his permanent interest. They at length manifested to the world, that no person proscribed by the choice of Englishmen, could attain dominion over them by force. They also showed to their French invaders, that an attempt to subjugate any part of this island by a foreign power, must ultimately recoil on the invaders. On the continent, the weakness and distractions of the allies, and the immense land force of the enemy, prevented the confederates from obtaining complete success; but the efforts of William were strenuous and important. Without gaining splendid victory, he prevented consummate generals, numerous and disciplined veterans of the enemy, from obtaining any signal or mate-

^g See defence of Londonderry, in Smollet's continuation of Hume, vol. i. chap. 1. and the whole narrative of the war in Ireland.

rial advantage. Jarring parties, and treacherous conspiracies, frequently disturbed the internal tranquillity of William's reign; but the greater number of his people, awake to the national honour and interest, desired to prosecute a war with vigour, which was necessary to repress the ambition of France.

THE exertions of the nation and parliament to humble the foe of British independence, exhibited that combined magnanimity and wisdom, which bears great inconveniences, in order to repel much greater evils. They induced Lewis to listen to much more reasonable terms of negotiation, than in the days of British supineness he had been accustomed to dictate, and showed the direct tendency of warlike strength and effort to produce peace to an intrepid and mighty people. In the detail of battles, Lewis was the conqueror; yet, in the result of success, prosperity, and power, the ambitious and imperious monarch of France found, at the treaty of Rhyswick, his dictatorial command limited and circumscribed. He there was taught, that the most formidable foe of Gallic encroachment is England. Deprived by a contest with Britain of that naval power which it had been one of the chief objects of his long reign to raise and extend, France might have learned, that a nation which seeks maritime aggrandizement by warring against a nation much more powerful at sea than herself, only labours to defeat her own purpose. From his continental successes, and his maritime disasters, Lewis might have learned, that while she directed her principal attention to armies, France might gratify her unbounded ambition; but that her marine exertions to cope with England, brought a reduction of her strength.

THE policy of France under her vainglorious despot disturbing her neighbours, unjust in principles, and barbarous in operation, was in its events ruinous to the country which that despot governed. Fitted, from climate, soil, situation, and the genius of her people, to acquire, enjoy, and preserve riches, and all the comforts of life; she, under the splendid but destructive domination of Lewis, experienced poverty and misery. The wars occupied numbers of the hands which the welfare of the people required to have been employed in cultivating the ground. The

England the most efficient foe of French encroachment.

Folly of a nation seeking maritime power in attacking England, which can overwhelm all naval opponents.

imports of corn wanted to supply the deficiencies, were intercepted by the naval armaments of her overpowering enemy. Multitudes perished by famine. The pompous pageantry of triumphant rejoicing for useless victory, could not prevent the melancholy spectacles of wretches starving with hunger. The impious strains of pretended gratitude, attributing to the divinity the successes of unwise injustice, were followed by the groans of subjects dying in the streets, because the infatuated ambition of their prince preferred ruinous wars to beneficial peace. These, together with the depopulation of his kingdom by narrow bigotry were among the glories of Lewis's aggressive policy. By his external politics, he reduced the internal prosperity, which the physical and moral resources of his country, the talents and skill of his ministers, had so rapidly advanced. The commercial and maritime improvements, rising under the superintending wisdom of Colbert in their salutary tendency to the happiness of the people, received effectual checks from Lewis himself. This view of the consequences of his wars might have taught that king, that his projects led only to splendid misery. His apparent moderation at Rhyswick afforded some grounds for expecting, that, for the future, he would pursue a system more wise and magnanimous, and would sacrifice the tinsel of false glory to the real benefit of his country. But those who fancied that the experienced errors of past counsels and conduct would produce a change of object and principle, gave him credit for a wisdom and greatness of mind which he did not possess. His object continued the same, he only varied the means: by a negotiation, and a dissolution of the defensive confederacy, he sought that rapacious encroachment, which he found to be no longer attainable by force. The peace of Rhyswick was intended to facilitate the accession of a Bourbon prince to the throne of Spain. Crafty in design, and dexterous in address, amusing the allies by partition treaties, Lewis overreached the sounder and more vigorous understanding of William, and raising his grandson to be monarch of Spain, rendered a kingdom, so long the rival, at length the appendage of France. This new act of ambition, so dangerous to the

A French
prince
raised to
the throne
of Spain.

independence of Europe, produced a new confederacy to avert the danger by removing its cause.

THE overgrown dominion of France demanded an expense unknown in the history of our wars, and very heavily felt by the nation. To lessen the immediate burdens of the people, a scheme was proposed, and adopted, for answering a great part of the exigencies of war, by anticipating the products of peace and prosperity. To supply the deficiencies of present income, sums were to be borrowed, on the probable expectation that the finances would increase in tranquillity and flourishing commerce, and afford a surplus beyond the expenditure. The debts contracted were to be guaranteed by the public faith, and to be discharged from the public savings: hence first arose, in England, the funding system. At its outset, the national debt was incurred under an idea of certain and even speedy liquidation. The security was chiefly an assignment of specific taxes, which was supposed, by an hypothetical calculation, sufficient to pay principle and interest in a few years. A national bank was established, for extending the credit and security of government, and for facilitating commercial intercourse and exchange. A mercantile joint stock company was, with that view, incorporated, under the name of the Bank of England. This body, composed in 1694, advanced the sum of twelve hundred thousand pounds, at eight per cent. constituting their first capital, and repayable at the option of government in 1705; but the debts incurred both to that corporation and other bodies and individuals, greatly increasing during the war, a system of perpetual funding was deemed expedient. In 1697, the debts of Great Britain, funded and unfunded, amounted to 21,515,742l. 13s. 8½d. incumbering the productive industry of the country with an annual burden of nearly one million seven hundred thousand pounds for interest, at the rate of eight per cent. then paid by government.

English
finance.

The bank
establish-
ed.

Funding
system.

To this system of supplying national exigencies, several strong objections were made. It was alleged, that the incumbrance would be an oppressive weight upon productive industry; that it was a temporary prop to national credit, which ought to be supported on the solid basis of

Argu-
ments
against it.

economy; that neither economy nor prudence justified the contraction of certain and great debts, upon uncertain and contingent means of repayment; that by this mode, the state resembled an improvident spendthrift, who, from his prodigality, being unable to wait for the regular payment of his revenue, and exceeding in expenditure the amount of his income, was obliged to borrow on usurious terms, and thus to impair his fortune. Enabled to borrow upon extravagant interest, ministers and princes would have internally the means of corruption, and obtain by influence what they could not enforce by power. The restriction imposed upon kingly prerogative, would be really unavailing. The king might make wars, not conducive to the defence or security of his people, and therefore injurious. The treasury, from borrowed money, affording funds for bribery, might, in the hands of an artful and corrupt minister, win a majority in parliament to support pernicious measures of the crown. The facility of raising money would incline and encourage the executive government to promote wars, and other expensive and useless undertakings. All the funds for paying national debt being transferable, and fluctuating in value, would introduce a system of stockjobbing, and withdraw capitals from agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, to be employed in speculations in the public funds. Instead of seeking riches, as traders, by the progressive efforts of industry and skill, many would become money-brokers and gamblers. Individuals, without ability, beneficial enterprise, and effort, would accumulate fortunes, from the exorbitant profits allowed by government; and the public would be impoverished in the same proportion. A system of borrowing unnecessarily, like every other pecuniary profusion, would increase by indulgence; the debt would not be temporary, as its authors asserted, but permanent and progressive, until it ended in bankruptcy. Such were the principal disadvantages which the adversaries of the funding system anticipated from its adoption.^a

^a See Smollett's History of William, *passim*. From various political writings, as well as the histories of the times, this was generally the opinion of the Tories and the landed interest, as the contrary was the opinion of the Whigs and moneyed interest. Enmity to the funding system, though not necessarily connected with Tory principles, was, from extraneous circumstances, a mark of Toryism.

Its supporters alleged, that the loans were not upon the principles of a spendthrift, squandering without any prospect of return; but in the true spirit of enlightened merchants, diminishing the pressure of payments necessarily made for the attainment of beneficial objects. As a merchant would, without hesitation, borrow money at a great interest, by which he had a moral certainty of either preventing a greater loss, or acquiring a greater gain; government borrowed, for the defence of the country against the enemies of the constitution, and for the security of our national independence against Gallic ambition. Agreeably to the soundest principles of mercantile policy, the public, when straitened for ready money, had incurred future and distant responsibilities, at seasons of more convenient liquidation. The efforts made through the loans, and which but for them would have been impracticable, would extend the greatness, prosperity, and opulence of the country. The establishment of this system, including the national bank, would revive and confirm public credit, and extend circulation. Increasing currency would, by competition, lower interest, enhance the value of land, promote the spirit of manufactures and commerce, facilitate the annual supplies, and augment the means of private wealth and public revenue. The scheme would attach the national creditors to the recent establishment, from which the security of their loans was derived; and find, in the private interests of moneyed capitalists, a strong bulwark against the house of Stuart: commercial men, a class of subjects already numerous and important, and zealous supporters of a free government, would be firm friends to the revolution.

Arguments for it

As the funded system was an anticipating tax on future and contingent, though probable industry, its efficiency towards the proposed discharge of debt, was necessarily to depend upon the amount of that industry, and consequently on the existence or continuance of circumstances favourable to its exertions. It was a burden upon future effort, the disadvantages of which were immediately felt, were pecuniary, and could be instantly appreciated by the most ordinary capacity. The advantages, commercial and political, could not be so obvious; and to be under-

Impartial view.

stood, required extensive knowledge and enlarged comprehension; and, though understood, to be relished required a wisdom and firmness which would encounter a smaller but present and certain inconvenience, to attain greater but more distant and eventual benefit. The new taxes imposed for liquidating the debt, were immediate deductions from either the profits or enjoyments of the payer. If the system was necessary, justice demanded that it should be adopted no farther than the necessity required; and that money borrowed on the national faith, to be paid from the national industry, should be employed for the national security, honour, and advantage. During the peace, the debt contracted by government was, in four years, reduced to sixteen millions, the reduction being upwards of five millions.

Progress
of com-
merce du-
ring this
reign.

THE wars in which William was engaged, considerably distressed mercantile adventures, by the capture of their ships. Unable, after the battle of La Hogue, to meet the English navy, France directed her chief maritime attention to the annoyance of our commerce. These depredations, producing individual loss, and consequently diminution of public revenue, caused great clamours against government; and the disaffected party represented our trade as having greatly decayed in the time of William. An impartial examination of commercial history leads to an opposite conclusion. Lewis's attempts to destroy the commerce of England, like those against her navy, recoiled on himself. Precluded, during hostilities, from traffic with France, the English began to seek from their own industry manufactures, which before they had imported from that country. Cut off from traffic with her southern neighbours, she encouraged and stimulated the manufacturing skill of the protestant refugees, whom the tolerating spirit of William protected from the persecution of Lewis. This liberal and enlightened policy, cherishing such useful preceptors, tended eventually to render the scholars superior to their masters. Affording security to artisans, the free constitution of England applied the strongest motives to the exertion of industry. France lost her exports of

no millions of this sum were advanced by the new East India company, and in 1698: see Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 597.

linen, by which before England had been chiefly supplied; various articles of hardware, her silk manufactures, and many other commodities, that these realms, taught to prepare for themselves, were soon able to furnish for other nations. Though not without a share in the calamities of war, the American colonies continued rapidly progressive in prosperity. The West Indies were now cultivated in the manner which rendered them most eminently lucrative. Sugar occupied the chief care of the planters, though, without excluding in the appropriate soils the cultivation of other productions. Barbadoes and Jamaica, especially, had obtained very great population and prosperity at this period. The African and Turkish trade was considerably extended; the northern was risen in a still greater proportion, as William, from inclination, vicinity, and command of the north seas,^k was closely connected with the northern powers. With Spain and Portugal, from political as well as commercial relations, England enjoyed the principal share of commerce. Even in the East Indies, notwithstanding the misconduct of the first company, and its contest with its competitor, the mercantile spirit of England overcame the disadvantages of a corporate monopoly. The renovated and improved system of polity which the revolution confirmed, secured property, and its general operation promoted the spirit of commerce. The acts, both for extending national and mercantile credit, stimulated commercial adventure and enterprise, by facility of accommodation, increase of currency, and an enlargement of that confidence on which mercantile transactions principally rest. The subsequent means for supporting the bank, also tended to the unprecedented extension of trade. Very favourable to the promotion of the same object, was the principle of recoinage, adopted by Montague, in the depreciated state of the existing coin. By subjecting the public, and not individual holders of current coins, to the loss accruing from the diminished weight, he confirmed national credit. The recoinage of silver, on terms so liberal and wise, was one of the most beneficial measures by which commerce was advanced in William's

^k See Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. ii.

reign.¹ In the four peaceful years of William's reign, English commerce very far surpassed any former efforts and success.

CONDUCTIVE as the counsels and acts of this illustrious prince were to the prosperity of England, there were reasons, not destitute of plausibility, for imputing to him partiality to his native country, whenever her interests and those of his kingdoms came into competition. The Scottish projects of establishing a colony on the isthmus of Darien, in order to trade with the South Sea from its western to its eastern boundaries, having been first countenanced and afterwards opposed by the king, his disapprobation of the scheme was imputed to the jealousy of the Dutch. In his continental politics, he was represented by the disaffected in England, as mindful chiefly of the interests of the states general. According to detractors, English blood and treasure were sacrificed for an ideal balance of power, not necessary for the security of these islands. English interference in continental politics might be useful to the Dutch, but was hurtful to this country. Bending our chief efforts to our navy, we, surrounded by the ocean, could defend ourselves against all foreign attempts, and therefore ought not to waste our strength in foreign disputes. The burden and expense of continental war were owing either to the impolicy or injurious designs of William. Such were the views of the tories; who, because unfavourable to William individually and his schemes, became inimical to the interference of Britain as a principal party in the contests of the continent. The whigs, friendly to William, and hostile to Lewis, whom they deemed the great protector and abettor of arbitrary

¹ The following remark by Mr. Anderson, after his account of the sum subscribed by the second East India company, strongly illustrates both the increase and actual state of commerce at the conclusion of William's war. "After so long, and such an expensive war, which was now but just ended; wherein, also, there had been very great losses, by captures of so many of our rich merchant ships, it gave foreign nations a high idea of the wealth and grandeur of England, to see two millions sterling money subscribed for in three days' time, and had the books been kept open longer, there were persons ready to have subscribed as much more; for although, higher proofs have since appeared of the great riches of the nation, because our wealth is visibly and much increased since that time, yet till then there had never been so illustrious an instance of England's opulence. This, however, was undoubtedly owing, in a great measure, to the illegal establishment of our free constitution, by the accession of king William and queen Mary to the throne; by which a firm confidence in the public faith was established on a solid basis."

power, ardently promoted the most active efforts of Britain against France. These distinctive and opposite plans of policy respecting the continent, commencing at the end of the seventeenth century, lasted through the eighteenth. Both parties have professed to seek security. The one has deemed naval effort sufficient for guarding the British isles against every danger; the other, either more comprehensive or more fanciful, has extended its vigilance against contingent as well as impending danger; and, for that purpose, has promoted powerful continental efforts, as the wise policy of Britain.

THE constitution of England, having been ascertained at the commencement of William's reign, assumed nearly the same appearance which it has since worn. The doctrine of resistance to an executive magistrate, violating our laws and constitution, was confirmed and exemplified in awful practice. The laws having been before defined with accurate precision, the power of dispensing with them was for ever terminated. Prerogative was completely circumscribed, that no king could of his own will act contrary to the interests and liberties of his subjects. From that time, if the counsels or measures of the sovereign were either arbitrary, or injurious to his people, they must be so through the neglect of the people themselves, or their chosen representatives in parliament; and not from any power lodged in the king. If the influence of the crown and its ministers has ever produced noxious measures since the revolution, the people must blame themselves for appointing delegates, either not qualified, or not disposed to promote the welfare of their country. The people and parliament may, either immediately or speedily, control and prevent every act of the crown which they do not approve. The liberty, property, and life of a Briton cannot be invaded, but by his own act, either through himself or his representatives. If, therefore, since the revolution, liberty, property, or life, has, in any one instance, been unjustly attacked, the injustice is chargeable to the whole body of the people, and not to the existing polity. Increased in prosperity, the means of subsistence, accommodation, and security; in riches and power; in invention, sagacity, enterprise; in aggre-

Polity of England, as fixed by the revolution,

secures liberty, property, and life.

Grand
source of
national
prosperity,
power, and
glory.

Act of set-
tlement.

gate industry and skill; in physical resources, and the character of her inhabitants; Britain brings undoubted evidence to show, that a system producing such a multiplicity of advantages must be wise and good.

THE same modified principle of hereditary succession, which had dictated the substitution of William and Mary for the lineal monarch, on the death of the princess Anne's son, suggested the act for setting the crown on the next protestant heir. Princess Sophia, grand daughter of James I., was his nearest descendant, not disqualified for the throne by the declared resolution and act of the English law-givers. The act of settlement was a corollary from the act of the convention parliament, which had settled the crown in 1689. The political doctrine established in both, was simple and explicit: in the mixed monarchy and free government of England, an hereditary line of princes is the most expedient, and conducive to the tranquillity and welfare of the people. But if the lineal heir, or even possessor, be under disqualifications incompatible with the good of the nation, the next in the line, not disqualified, shall succeed. These were the grounds on which Anne ascended the throne, to the exclusion of her brother, the son and representative of king James.

English
parties.

I. Whigs;

FROM the revolution, and through the reign of William, the political parties were, in principles and objects, three. The first, the Whigs, who supported the new establishment from the love of liberty, as well as enmity to popery and the French influence. The whigs were inimical to the extensive power of the clergy, as incompatible with the freedom which they adored. Their doctrines, civil and ecclesiastical, were extremely disagreeable to those who abetted passive obedience, either to the monarch and his servants, or the church, its bishops, and its convocations. In theology, as well as politics, the whigs estimated the importance of doctrines, by their tendency and effects upon civil society, and little regarded the contentions of metaphysical divinity. Friendly to toleration, they reckoned the criterion of its extent and bounds, political expediency; and proposed, that all sects should be unmolested, who did not disturb the public tranquillity, or the constitutional rights of English subjects. They patronised and encour-

aged the protestant dissenters, a very powerful body, and firm friends to the revolution. On the side of the whigs, many votaries of the church of England were ranged: these were persons who venerated the established church, as the promoter of true christian piety and morality;^m but who, not desirous of exalting either kingly or priestly power beyond constitutional bounds, were denominated the low church. Dissenters;
and low church.

THE second party consisted of the Tories, votaries of passive obedience, and staunch supporters of the church. These, being inimical to popery, thought the revolution necessary for the preservation of the protestant religion, and considered the popery of James and his son as the sole reason for excluding them from the throne. The tories reprobated the political doctrines of the whigs, and the theological opinions of the dissenters; and exalting the pretensions of the priesthood, thereby acquired the denomination of high church. According to these, prophaneness and impiety were the distinguishing characteristics of William's reign, and were bringing the nation fast to destruction.ⁿ II. Tories;
and high church.

THE third party was the Jacobites; who though tories in many of their principles and sentiments, exceeded them in the practical adoption of passive obedience, and maintained the iniquity of resistance to the hereditary prince, whatever his conduct might be, and sought the restoration of James to the throne. The two former parties had been alternately opponents to king William; but the whigs had most frequently supported his political measures. The jacobites, from their principles and objects, had been uniformly inimical to our deliverer, but varied their mode of hostility according to circumstances. Sometimes they tried rebellion, sometimes conspiracies; but, finding their treasonable efforts unsuccessful, during a great part of his reign, they confined their attempts to the diffusion of discontent. III. Jacobites.

DIFFERENT as the three parties were, and in many respects opposite, yet they concurred in supporting queen Anne. The church party knew that her majesty was a All concur in supporting queen Anne.

^m To this class of whigs, belonged Burnet, Tillotson, Howdley, and Addison.
ⁿ See Pope's Essay on Criticism.

Respective
reasons
and mo-
tives.

Marlbo-
rough.

Confedera-
cy against
France.

sincere and zealous member of the church of England, and trusted that she would support the ecclesiastical establishment and doctrines: they expected, that, through her protecting influence, the high church would triumph over sectaries, schismatics, heretics, presbyterians, and whigs, over low churchmen and lukewarm friends of the hierarchy. The jacobites, conceiving her majesty attached to the hereditary line, hoped that, having no issue alive, she would attempt and effect the restoration of the lineal heir. Aware that the queen held her throne upon their principles, the whigs doubted not that, from prudence and self-interest, she would rest chiefly for support on the most strenuous adversaries to the claim of the pretender. They knew that Anne, a personage of very moderate intellects, was entirely governed by the countess of Marlborough, and through her, by the consummate talents of the earl; and that the whig plans of policy were the most consonant to the interests and views of this celebrated hero. Having succeeded to the crown with the favour of all the jarring parties, Anne, on her first appearance in parliament, declaring her sincere attachment to the church, gratified the tories; and testifying her resolution to maintain the laws and liberties of her country and the protestant succession, and her determination to adhere to the counsels and engagements of William, satisfied the whigs. England, again the protector of European independence, and the provident guardian of her own security, went to war with France, the encroaching disturber of Europe. The succession war originated in the same principles as the former confederacy of William: Agreeing in the necessity of hostilely opposing France, the tories wished Britain to act only as an auxiliary; but the whigs, if not more patriotic in intention, at least more comprehensive in view, saw that partial and secondary efforts from Britain would not effectually answer the purpose of her interferences: a mere maritime and defensive war would be only a half measure, of short-sighted and inefficient policy. The whigs succeeded, in procuring the adoption of their plan to be carried into execution under a renowned general, now at the head of their party. The powerful efforts of the free states imparted to their allies a portion of their

spirit, as well as a considerable share of the manifold resources which liberty formed and nourished. The discomfiture and destruction of his bravest troops whenever they faced an Eugene or a Marlborough; Turin, Ramillies, and Blenheim; the annihilation of his navy, and the ruin of his commerce, under the resistless navy of England; the impoverished state of his finances, and the bitter miseries of his subjects; afforded to the aged violator of justice an awful lesson, that the wise policy of France, fertile, strong, internally secure, improved and improveable, is not, by disturbing her neighbours, to distress and impoverish herself; but by peace, and the arts which peace promotes among so ingenious a people, to cultivate and extend her immense resources for her own comfort and happiness. What peace had done for her prosperity, war had as uniformly undone. The combination begun, and long employed for maintaining the balance of power, and ensuring future exemption from disturbance, had completely accomplished its object. But the confederates, in the exultation of victory, forgot the actual and the only wise purpose of the war. Not contented with the king's dereliction of Spain, they sought the subjugation and dismemberment of France itself; disdained the very ample and momentous concessions offered by Lewis, under the dejection of continued defeat; and drove him, through indignation and despair, to efforts which in any other circumstances he would have never attempted. His people, enraged at the haughty and unrelenting severity of the confederates, and interested for the glory of their monarch and the defence of their country, made exertions that amazed both their enemies and themselves. The impolitic refusal of victors to grant favourable terms to foes defeated but not subdued, inspired the vanquished, and enabled them to make head against the combination, until the jealousies incidental to such alliances, and other favourable circumstances, produced its dissolution. The confederates learned, when it was too late, that having in decisive victory the means of concluding honourable and advantageous peace, which would have fully effected the wise and meritorious purposes of the war, they ought to have embraced the propitious moment. Intestine divisions

Succession
war.

Peace the
real interest
of
France.

Moderation in
victory, wise
policy.

had not then withdrawn the most efficient member of the alliance. The intriguing artifices of an inferior court servant,^o the bigoted declamation of a hot headed zealot.^p had not displaced the first general of his time, or detached England from a confederacy for preserving the balance of power. If they had subdued Lewis as completely, as by continuing the war they proposed, Britain and Holland, in rendering Austria predominant, would have totally overturned the balance which they had been fighting to establish.^q The objections of the confederates, from a professed doubt of the sincerity of the French sovereign, were by no means consistent with the sagacity of that consummate politician, who guided the counsels as well as led the arms of the allies.^r The penetration of Marlborough might have seen the probability of the sincerity of Lewis, in his situation and conduct. An interest, almost amounting to necessity, rendered peace upon humiliating terms desirable, in the ruinous and miserable state of the French kingdom. The party which, in England, was supreme in power, could have dictated a peace that would have fully separated Spain from France; repressed Bourbon ambition; confirmed the independence of Europe, the protestant succession, and the security of Britain; and obtained every national object for embarking in the confederacy. If they desired more, they desired too much. Prolongation of the war, therefore, was unnecessary, and consequently unwise and hurtful. In the changes of political rulers, extravagant concessions completed the evils of impolitic rigour. The precipitate advances of the tories yielded to Lewis infinitely more, than, when offered, the repulsive haughtiness of the whigs had refused. The terms were far from corresponding with the objects for which the war had been undertaken; and very unequal to the success with which it had been attended, and the force which the allies still possessed for its farther prosecution. But if the whigs most justly and severely censured the peace of Utrecht, impartial examiners must admit, that its evils might have

^o Mrs. Marsham. ^p Sacheverel. ^q See Somerville's History of queen Anne, passim. ^r See Dr. Somerville's account of the negotiations at the Hague in 1709; and at Gertruydenburg, in 1710. Cunningham's history; also the Memoirs of Torcy, and the several negotiators.

been prevented at the Hague, or Gertruydenburg. Oxford and Bolingbroke could not have concluded an inadequate peace, unless Marlborough had three years before rejected conditions, not only adequate, but highly honourable and advantageous for Britain and her allies.

THE parties, from which sprung this great diversity in plans and measures of foreign politics, in their long and violent contentions, became more determinate in their principles, more definite in their character, more uniform in their views, and more methodical in their plans, than during the preceding reign. In the first years of Anne, the tories, always much more agreeable to the real inclinations of the queen, were apparently superior in the house of commons and nation. But the use which they made of these advantages, manifested no great depth of policy, and tended little to secure the continuance of their power. The principal object of the tory majority in the first parliament of queen Anne, was to promote high church doctrines, and to restrict the dissenters. To effect their purpose, a cry was raised, *that the church was in danger.*

Parties become more determinate in their characters and objects.

THE prudence and expediency of exciting an alarm, in order to secure political influence, depends, in a free country, on the exact state of popular opinion. At the end of William's reign, when discontent had been so studiously spread against the king, and all those whom he favoured, many conscientious members of the church really believed that conspiracies were forming by republicans and schismatics, to overthrow the ecclesiastical establishment. To its well meaning votaries, the church was then the chief subject of anxiety and alarm. But though they were churchmen, they were Englishmen and protestants; and if they hated presbyterians much, they hated Frenchmen and popery more. The war breaking out, occupied their attention, and engaged their passions. The grand and comprehensive scheme of operations promoted by the whigs, proved successful. If they regarded the tories as the protectors of the church, they considered the whigs as the vanquishers of our most inveterate enemies. Their fears for the church were forgotten in the triumphant joy for the glory of their country. Dissenters were not the only enemies of the church. Conspiracies in

Fluctuations of popular opinion during Anne's reign.

favour of the pretender, revived their fears of popery ; and turned their favourable attention to those whom they considered as the champions of the protestant succession, The house of lords, averse to the bigotry and violence by which the commons were actuated, strenuously opposed their bill against occasional conformity, and other measures of impassioned persecution, tending to oppress the dissenters. Defeating these illiberal propositions, they exhibited that moderation which so peculiarly becomes the intermediate body, that the constitution intends to hold the balance between popular intemperance and monarchical encroachment, and afforded a striking and salutary instance of the wisdom and utility of the controls established by the British constitution. From these causes, the tide of popular opinion began to flow for the whigs. With a support so very momentous to a political party, other circumstances cooperated : the whig system of continental policy rendered our allies peculiarly friendly to that party, because, urging the most extensive and vigorous efforts : they were closely connected with the moneyed interest, that could and did contribute most powerfully to the immense pecuniary exertions requisite in the present scheme of war. If inclination, therefore, attached the queen to the tories, policy impelled her to support and employ the whigs. The interest and ambition of Marlborough directed him to join that party, as his transcendent abilities placed him at the head of any set of men with whom he united. His duchess, by her uncontrolled power over the queen, strongly assisted in rendering her majesty (though in her heart a zealous tory) in her conduct a most active and effectual instrument under the direction of the whigs. Though there were among the tories, men of considerable abilities, yet in the aggregate of talents, the whigs were greatly superior. The men of the highest estimation in church,^r state,^s and literature,^t were of their side : not only favourable circumstances, but continuance in office, mutual intercourse, and coincidence of views and interests, rendered the whigs a closely compacted body,

Whigs, a compact, firm, and powerful body.

^r Atterbury was not yet known.

^s Harley, Harcourt, and St. John, had not joined the tories.

^t Swift was connected with Addison, Halifax,

and other illustrious whigs. Pope was not yet known.

capable of acting very powerfully in concert. Their principles of conduct and bond of union were such, as they durst openly avow ; a firm attachment to liberty, to the British constitution as recently ascertained and established, and to the protestant succession as preserving and securing our rights and polity. Hence they were eager promoters of every scheme that tended to ensure the settlement of the crown, and closely connected themselves with the family of Hanover ; which from their principles, protestations, and conduct, regarded this body as its most assured friends, and indeed the bulwark of the expected accession.

THE able and enlightened politicians of that party strenuously promoted literary effort : some of them were themselves men of taste, erudition, and philosophy : those who were not scholars, possessing vigorous understandings, knowing mankind, and the state of society in England, liberally and wisely patronised learning. Many works were published in favour of general freedom, and particularly the whig acceptance of freedom, by the disciples of the celebrated Locke. Intending the greatest perfection of polity, and the highest happiness of mankind, but accustomed to metaphysical disquisition in speculating upon government, this renowned philosopher rather contemplates his own abstractions, then considers man as he is found by observation and experience. Taking their tone from this extraordinary man, other whig-writers on political subjects, recurring to his metaphysical principles, drew from them subtle inferences, leading, if admitted, to republicanism, democracy, and even to equality of rank and property." This was also the kind of doctrine often advanced in the senate, where there was a great predilection for abstract reasoning on politics. Neither speakers nor writers appeared aware of the consequences of such theories, if practically adopted ; and though it was very evident they were far from desiring to carry them literally into execution, they however afforded a handle to their opponents, to charge them with an inclination to overturn the church and monarchy. The tories represented their

Whig literature.

Political metaphysics take the tone of Locke.

a See Headley, Tindal, and many other literary supporters of the whigs.

Practical
conduct.

adversaries as republicans, and endeavoured to impress the queen with the same idea, and to revive among the people an alarm that the church was in danger. Established with the people by a series of victory and glory, with the queen by the applause of the country, the splendor and success of their achievements, and the influence of the Marlborough family, with the destined successors to the crown by their exertions in their favour, the whig party numerous, able, compact, and skilful, had probable grounds for conceiving that its power would be lasting. This expectation, however, proved vain : soon after their power had reached its highest zenith, it was overthrown by trifling instruments. An inferior menial first broke one great tie by which the queen was bound to the whigs, and through them to the continental confederacy : and was the means of conforming her political conduct to the wishes of the tories, by disposing her to abandon the whig administration, and its political plans. She was soon impressed with an opinion, that the church was endangered, from the prevalence of the whigs, and their friends the dissenters. Meanwhile, the high church party was extremely active in inciting the people against their adversaries : they represented the war, which had brought very heavy and oppressive burdens on the public, as carried on now for the interested purposes of the ministers. According to the tories, the increasing taxes, and the loss of so many countrymen and relations, were now no longer undergone for the security and glory of England, but to gratify the ambition and avarice of an interested faction. Besides the horrors of a now unnecessary war, the whig counsels, (they asserted,) and measures, were pernicious in peace, and tended to overthrow government and religion. The whigs were schismatics, infidels, republicans, and levellers. The church was in the most imminent danger, and must perish, unless the people were roused to overwhelm the whigs and dissenters. Eagerly urged by clerical demagogues and other ardent partisans, these topics now spread the alarm which had in vain been attempted some years before. The train having been thus laid, a person was not long wanting to light the match. Sacheverel, a furious adventurer in high church

doctrines, without ability, learning, or eloquence, directed the opinions, and guided and stimulated the conduct, of the majority of the people throughout England. His discourses, contemptible in themselves, were venerated and adored, for the reason which has so often procured currency and admiration to frivolous nonsense or inflammatory fanaticism; they declaimed for the popular prejudices which then happened to be afloat. The fumes of bigotry which he blew up might have evaporated, had not the whigs, by a trial, taken the most effectual means to give him and his inculcations importance. Exalted by a well deserved but ill judged impeachment, Sacheverel afforded a lesson to future statesmen and politicians, of the inefficacy of persecution to remove popular delusion. The extravagant ravings of this infuriated bigot were received through the kingdom as oracles of wisdom. Imbibing the general sentiment, the queen became eagerly desirous of being freed from the whig administration. Addresses, drawn up in the moment of enthusiasm, were represented as the dictates of conviction and solid reasoning. During the popular ferment, parliament being dissolved, the elections (as might have been with certainty foreseen) proved decidedly favourable to the promoters of the ferment; the whigs were dismissed. Mr. Harley professed to desire a coalition of parties; but the means that were employed by those whom he now headed, being very inimical to such a junction, the tories held the offices of administration which had been forcibly wrested from the whigs, and these two parties became irreconcilable adversaries. As the tories had represented their party as the only friends of the church and monarchy, the whigs declared themselves the only supporters of constitutional liberty and the protestant succession; and imputed the peace to a partiality for Lewis, as the supporter of arbitrary power and the pretender. With a resolute firmness, adhering more closely to their principles and party than even when in office, the whigs were a very powerful body to promote or thwart any political measure. Both principle and interest bound them to the house of Hanover; they impressed that family with the persuasion, that both the internal and foreign politics of the tories were intended and calculated for the

For a time
defeated
by high
church en-
thusiasm.

Whigs
zealously
support
the pro-
testant
succession.

restoration of James Stuart ; that the queen eagerly desired that violation of the parliamentary settlement ; that the whigs, and they only, were securing the throne to the protestant succession ; and thus, that when the Hanoverian prince should be called to the crown, he would find his subjects divided into two parties ; the one his friends, and the other his enemies. Successful in conveying to the court of Hanover this opinion, they gave to its princes a bias, which lasted long after their accession to the British throne.

Union with
Scotland,

a grand
source of
internal
and external
benefit
to both
kingdoms.

FROM zeal for the protestant accession, as well as from sound and comprehensive general policy, proceeded a measure, which, though opposed by narrow views of national prejudice and pride, has been momentarily beneficial to the two countries that formerly constituted separate kingdoms in the island of Great Britain. The union forever put an end to those internal wars which had formerly occasioned the desolation of both. It detached Scotland from a connexion with France, not less hurtful to herself than troublesome to England. It prevented the crowns from being separated,^u as would have most probably taken place, had the two kingdoms continued in a state of political disunion. It delivered both nations from the impending evils of a controverted regal succession, and the fears which were justly entertained for the protestant religion and civil liberty. Preserving to both countries the protestant faith and a free limited monarchy, both in ecclesiastical, and civil concerns, it left to each party the forms, articles, institutions, and laws, to which they were most accustomed and attached, which were interwoven with their manners, their sentiments, their opinions, their property, their domestic and civil engagements, and their duties. Both Scotland and England could now impart to each other, their respective advantages, and both were gainers by the participation. Of the two, the party which laboured under the greatest wants, no-doubt, acquired the greater advantage by a copartnership, which afforded the means of supply ; but the benefit which Scotland derived,

^u See proceedings in the Scottish parliament and nation, from the first years of queen Anne till the union ; and the views not only of the jacobites, but of the presbyterians. See Somerville, Cunningham, Smollet, &c.

being still dependent on her own industry and skill, she by those very qualities promoted the interest of England. Without minutely scrutinizing the comparative emoluments of both, we evidently perceive, that England and Scotland, in the means of subsistence, accommodation, defence, riches, power, comfort at home, and respectability abroad, are both severally and jointly beyond all calculation benefited by the UNION.

COMMERCE continued in this reign to increase in enterprise, skill, and success: the views of merchants were enlarged, as their importance so greatly rose in the community. The war, no doubt, interrupted trade, by the capture of ships; this evil, to a certain degree unavoidable, was heightened by the inattention of the admiralty to the important department of its business, which should provide convoys. The near relation of the lord high admiral to the sovereign, through delicacy prevented so close and vigorous an investigation into the conduct of naval affairs, as the interests of commerce and the good of the country required. But notwithstanding these disadvantages, manufactures and commerce were extremely flourishing. Civil and religious liberty invited many industrious and skilful foreigners into this country; while others fled thither from the horrors of war. The enlarged policy of the whigs, who saw the advantages that had resulted, and were resulting, from the emigration of ingenious and industrious refugees, and who knew that the wealth and power of the nation rises with the number of capable and active inhabitants, in order to attach the late emigrants completely to the country, proposed that they should be naturalized, and a law was actually passed for that purpose; which, lasting till near the end of the reign, was extremely favourable both to trade and public credit. The refugees promoted manufactures and merchandise, and were also purchasers to a very considerable extent in the funds. One very convincing proof of the increase of commerce during this reign, was the rise of public credit; the ease with which very large^x supplies were raised for the use of government; and the readiness with which loans were obtained at six per cent, instead

Commerce and navigation, under queen Anne.

^x According to the value of money and estimation of expenses in those times.

of eight, amounting to upwards of three millions annually,^y besides the yearly taxes. Our North American colonies continuing to experience that wise and benignant policy, which, satisfied with affording protection and claiming general allegiance, left internal efforts and industry to their own course, was the most important and rising market for British manufactures and commerce.^z

THE trade of the West India colonies was also now of considerable importance. The East India traffic, small as it was, compared with present times, yet notwithstanding the cessation of competition by the union of the two companies into one, was making a lucrative accession to British opulence. Our trade with Spain almost ceased, during the war concerning its crown; but our traffic to other parts of Europe, and to Africa, was, from our maritime strength and the weakness of our enemies, proportionably enlarged. Exerting our naval force in annoying the enemy, and (though not uniformly) in protecting our own commerce, we fully taught contending nations a lesson, which they might have partially learned before, that if weaker commercial naval powers are fighting with a stronger, while the inferior loses his mercantile gain, the superior, by commanding the seas, promotes his trade. Of commercial treaties concluded in this reign, the convention with Portugal proved beneficial to this country, though it showed that the principles of commercial philosophy were not yet thoroughly understood. The revered authority of Locke had impressed statesmen with a very erroneous principle in political economy, that national wealth consists in the quantity of gold and silver which a country possesses; that therefore the chief object of a commercial statesman is to increase these precious metals. The professed object of Mr. Methven's treaty with Portugal, was to procure for our commodities, gold from the Brazils; a purpose which might have been effected without any treaty, while Britain could supply such articles as the possessors of gold wanted. The interchange has, on

Principles
of political
economy
not thoroughly
under-
stood.

^y The national debt, which, at the commencement of Anne's reign, was 16,394,701l. 10s. 7 1-4d, at the end of it amounted to 53,681,076l. 5s. 6 1-2d. As by far the greater part of this debt was owing to British subjects, it is a proof how much commerce and private riches must have been augmented.

^z See the statement quoted by Mr. Burke from official documents, in his speech, March 22d, 1775, on conciliation with America.

the whole, proved more lucrative to the Portuguese, than to the British : still, however, though the balance of trade may have been against us with Portugal,^a it has been advantageous as a source of traffic, of revenue, and a nursery for seamen. The chief objections to the commercial treaty of Utrecht, were founded on the same erroneous system.^b It was alleged, that a treaty with France, by interfering with our treaty with Portugal, would diminish our imports of Brazil gold.

ANNE's reign, notwithstanding a war of eleven years, was favourable to commerce, and the prosperity of the country. In her external relations, Britain made much greater and more extensive efforts on the continent, than at any former period, though she was precipitate and impolitic in the negotiation at Utrecht, and thereby yielded much too advantageous terms to the aggressor, whom she had vanquished; yet, in the misery of his people, the bankruptcy of his finances, and the discomfiture of his force, she evinced to Lewis, that the unjust ambition of the French sovereign which compelled Britain to arm against him, rendered that fine country wretched, which might have been happy.

Character
and result
of Anne's
reign.

WHILE the parties, that raged with such violence from the dismissal of the whig ministry, were increasing in mutual hatred and inveteracy, the death of Anne called a new family to the throne.

GEORGE, elector, of Hanover, a prince of a solid and vigorous capacity, well skilled in the history of politics and interests of the different European powers, a brave, prudent, experienced general, was in the prime of life, when, as next protestant heir of the royal line, he became by the rule of inheritance, as it had been modified by the king and parliament, sovereign of these realms. In his person, hereditary succession was as closely adhered to as was compatible with liberty and religion: the direct and next presumptive heirs having chosen to disqualify themselves, the next who had not disqualified himself succeeded. George, a great grandson of a king of England, George I.

^a See Wealth of Nations, vol. ii. p. 325.

^b That a trade may be advantageous to a party, against whom the balance is, is now very evident; as may be clearly seen in the Wealth of Nations, and also in the marquis of Lausdown's speech on the commercial treaty with France.

sprung from that king's daughter, came to the throne; instead of James, another great grandson of the same king, sprung from his son. Hereby the extent and limitations of hereditary succession to the crown were ascertained: the lineal heir was to succeed, unless, by refusing to comply with the conditions required, he himself should virtually renounce the inheritance.

FITTED by his talents, dispositions, and character, to govern his new kingdoms suitably to their interests and views, George's administration gave much satisfaction to those who had stood forth as the champions of civil, religious, and constitutional liberty. Policy as well as inclination attached him first and chiefly to the whigs, the strenuous supporters of himself and his family. The tory leaders in the last ministry of queen Anne, had gone such lengths in opposing the whigs, as to be deemed inimical to the succession of the house of Hanover. If they did not design the restoration of the lineal heir, their actions had appeared conducive to that purpose. They had cultivated a close intercourse with Lewis, the great patron of the pretender; promoted known jacobites to civil and military offices; and dismissed from the army whig officers, to make room for persons attached to the house of Stuart. At the election, jacobites had been countenanced and chosen, through the influence and patronage of the tory party.^c The ministers had effected the repeal of the barrier treaty, which bound the states general to guarantee the protestant succession; were extremely cold to the Dutch, the zealous friends of that settlement; and encouraged invectives against king William, its framer, and all its principal supporters. The tories encouraged writings and writers inimical to the protestant succession. The high church, so much venerated by the tories, abetted the doctrines of indefeasible hereditary right, and were ardent in inculcating intolerance to dissenters, the warm friends of the revolution and protestant succession, and enemies of jacobitism and the principles by which it was upheld. While the tories so acted, as to exhibit a probable appearance of a friendly disposition to the jacobites, they stren-

attached to
the whigs;

suspicious
of the
tories.

^c See Somerville's Dissertation on the Danger of the Protestant Succession, at the end of his history, passim. Cunningham's history:

usually opposed every measure desired by the friends of the house of Hanover as conducive to the security of the protestant succession.^d Although the concurrence of so many circumstances did not positively prove the tory leaders to have formed a design against the Hanoverian succession, and though they all might have arisen from different causes, yet they together constituted such a degree of probability, as to render it prudent in the king to repose his first trust in the whigs, and to be cautious and circumspect in bestowing high offices on any of the active tory leaders until he had investigated their intentions. But, perhaps, it might have been practicable for the king to have gradually conciliated the greater number of the most active tories. His promotion of whigs exclusively, and dismissal of tories indiscriminately, from the recent conduct of both respectively, was natural, though a more comprehensive scheme of policy would have been wise. At the time of the accession, the passions and prejudices of both sides were extremely high. The cool and impartial examination of a discerning and unbiassed stranger must have seen, that there were on both sides great abilities and great virtues, mingled with the violence and excesses of party zeal; and that the leading and acting men on both sides might be rendered useful in various departments of public service. But George, though discerning, was not unbiassed; though calm in his own temper, judicious in his opinions, and temperate in his conduct, yet, from his situation, and the connexions which it had dictated, he was become the member of a party; and ascended the throne of England, on the one hand, with the liberal and enlightened principles, but on the other with the prejudices and passions, of an English whig. Choosing from that party his ministers and confidential advisers, he not only, by this first measure of his government, disgusted the tories, on account of the exclusive preference of their adversaries, but imbibing the resentments of the whigs, too readily and hastily countenanced their prosecutions. The intemperance of ministerial proceedings excited great displeasure among the friends and

Employs
whigs too
exclusive-
ly.

^d See Swift's Thoughts on the present State of Affairs, passim.

Intemperate violence of the whigs.

supporters of the prosecuted leaders, and giving particular umbrage to the high church party, inspired the jacobites with a notion, that the disapprobation testified or discovered on account of these acts, and the partiality of the king to the whig party, indicated a general dissatisfaction with the whole system of his new government. From this misapprehension, they conceived the opportunity favourable to the pretender. Hence, together with the instigations of the old tyrant of France, arose the rebellion of 1715. The comparatively small number of those who joined in this insurrection, and the vast majority which adhered to king George, to civil and religious liberty, proved, that though certain counsels of ministry were not agreeable to the whole of the nation, yet the house of Hanover was firmly established on the throne. The trifling attempts that were afterwards made in the same reign, being so speedily discomfited, confirmed the same position. Indeed it was evident, that the good sense of the British, their firmness and patriotism, would strenuously and successfully resist every future attempt to deprive them of the blessings which they enjoyed under the house of Hanover. It was farther obvious, that the security of the king and the existing establishment rested solely upon his subjects themselves, as by those only the disturbances were quelled. But though the number of those who actively rose against the king was but small, very many continued dissatisfied with the monopoly of favour and confidence enjoyed by the whigs: That policy, justifiable only if necessary, maintained a very great division in the kingdom, and precluded the nation from the services of many brave, able, and enterprising men. The prosecutions against the tory leaders very strikingly manifested the injustice and oppression arising from a violent spirit of party. The most arbitrary ministers could not have wrested facts and circumstances more, to give a plausible colour to tyranny, than the professed champions of liberty in their constructions of lord Oxford's acts: in their endeavours to impute treason^e to Boling-

Prosecutions.

^e Swift's account of the mode proposed in the academy of projectors, for discovering plots and conspiracies, was not a much overcharged satire against the whig deviators from the salutary strictness of Edward III.'s definitions of treason.

broke and Atterbury, and in compelling the most illustrious and able men, without any evidence of guilt, to seek refuge in exile.

THE first years of the whig administration being employed chiefly in reducing their adversaries, they afterwards proceeded to a system of general policy. Their professed objects were, to secure the protestant succession, and to promote the financial and commercial prosperity of the country. The real tendency of their conduct, however, in a great degree, was to extend the influence of ministry over the moneyed interest and the legislature. The first parliament which met after George's accession, being elected when the whigs had just recovered their superiority, consisted in a great measure of members of that party. Before the three years had expired, ministry had declined very much in popularity. The nation, though it had shown itself firmly attached to the establishment, did not approve of the exclusive government of one class of men. There was much reason, therefore, to expect, that a new election might return many representatives not friendly to the whig monopoly. To prevent so probable an obstruction, the whig leaders formed a very bold and effectual project: this was to procure an act establishing septennial parliaments instead of triennial, and prolonging the present for four years. The amount of this act was, that delegates, chosen by their constituents for three years, voted without the consent of these constituents, that the trust should last for four years longer than it had been conferred by the owners. The alleged reason was, the prevalence of disaffection and jacobitism, which the ferment of a new election would stimulate and promote. Triennial parliaments served to keep up party divisions: a longer term would contribute powerfully to the evaporation of discontent and factious passions, and secure the protestant settlement and the tranquillity of the country. The opponents of the change insisted, that on the same principle by which trustees continued their office beyond the appointment of their employers, they might render their power perpetual, and cease to depend on those employers; that so long a duration would afford to ministers an opportunity of systematising corruption, and establish-

Septennial
parlia-
ments.

ing by its means an influence over the legislature, which might render that body merely instrumental in the hands of the executive government; that the will of the king and minister would be the sole rule of legislative as well as executorial conduct; that the power of the crown would, through the whigs, be rendered really much greater than the tories had ever wished to establish or support.

Growth of
ministerial
influence.

It is certain, that ministerial influence in this reign, whether from the long continuance of parliament, or other causes, became much greater than at any former time. Corruption had been carried to a considerable length by the whigs, in the time of queen Anne, on particular occasions: but it was reserved for Walpole to establish it as a methodical and regular engine of government; and to bribe in a dextrous and circuitous manner, which might not only escape detection, but in some degree even impose on the receiver, and which might make him suppose that to be the reward of merit from his country, which was really the wages of service to a minister. Closely connected with stockjobbers, and other adventurers, in projects for the acquisition of money, Walpole found, through loans and similar government transactions, various opportunities of bestowing indirect donatives. Nor was he sparing in direct presents. He appears to have been the first minister who thoroughly understood the mode of managing parliaments, and making law-givers willing tools in the hands of the court. He first completely succeeded in identifying, according to the apprehension of the majority, compliance with ministers, and patriotism; opposition to ministers, and disaffection to the constitution. George's reign is an epoch in parliamentary history, as, since that time, whether ministers have been able or weak, wise or foolish, they have rarely failed to have the cooperation of parliament in their projects, whether useful or hurtful. The influence of the crown was established on the most solid basis by the whig party, and the whig leader, sir Robert Walpole.

Walpole.

Relation of
Britain to
foreign
powers.

THE relative state of Britain and foreign powers, did not require from this country any great efforts. Lewis XIV. after for sixty years disturbing the tranquillity of Europe, was at length dead. During the minority of his

successor, the regent of France, fortunately for his country, from private and personal ambition, cultivated amity and intercourse with England, in hopes that should the young king die, Britain might assist him in succeeding to the throne, in exclusion of the still more nearly related Philip Bourbon of Spain. These selfish views long cherished peace and alliance between the two chief powers of the world. France being pacific, none of the other nations could afford any serious ground of alarm. The menaces of Charles XII. or the displeasure of the czar of Muscovy, excited little apprehension. The repeated attempts of Spain to promote the claims of the pretender, and to disturb the peace of Britain, unassisted by France, were easily crushed or prevented. A signal defeat at sea effectually convinced the Spanish king of his impolicy in provoking the attack of an English fleet. The harmony which prevailed between France and George I. though arising from temporary coincidence of views in his majesty and the French regent, rather than from an enlarged comprehension of solid and permanent interests, was beneficial to both parties; by allowing the two countries in tranquillity to recover from the evils of the dreadful wars which had occupied the two preceding reigns, it manifested to both, that sound policy dictated agreement, and not discord, to the two first kingdoms of the universe. The king, in his negotiations and engagements with France and with other powers, intended to strengthen the security of the protestant succession: that was the chief object of the greater number of the treaties in which his history so very much abounds. Large and numerous subsidies were paid to purchase assistance, or to buy off apprehended or threatened hostility.^f

Peace between France and Britain the interest of both.

THE party in opposition to ministers asserted, that as the various attempts made in favour of the pretender, had been crushed by British patriotism and energy, the recourse to foreign assistance was totally unnecessary. Experience had shown, that a great majority of the people was disposed and able to support the constitutional establishment.

^f See the treaty concluded with the king of Sweden, in 1717.

While British subjects were attached to their sovereign, he wanted no foreign props to his throne.

King's partiality for his native dominions.

It was extremely natural for his majesty to retain a partiality for his native country, and under that partiality to blend and identify interests that certainly had no real connexion. Some of the treaties concluded, and subsidies paid by Great Britain, were, on very probable grounds, alleged to be employed in promoting the advantage of Hanover, without affording the smallest benefit to this country. The balance of power in the two former reigns, so necessary an object of attention, and so wise a ground of confederacy, though under George I. it produced a multiplicity and variety of alliances, yet really, while France remained quiet, appears to have been in no danger.⁵ The foreign policy, however, of the first George, though, perhaps too minute and busy in detail, was, on the whole, fitted to maintain the rank and respectability of his kingdoms among the continental powers. If Britain in his time did not rise in dignity, at least she did not fall.

An enthusiasm of avarice pervades commercial Europe;

THE connexion between the whigs and the moneyed interest, produced acts and consequences that make a memorable part of this reign. Commerce had opened the way to riches; riches acquired, stimulated accumulation; or contemplated, excited enterprise and adventure. The gains of merchandise are commonly progressive. The high interest paid, or the donatives granted by government on loans, enabled many individuals to acquire fortunes much more rapidly than trade could admit. The fluctuating credit of the national funds opened a source of hazardous gains, by dealing in stock; or, to use the appropriate term, stockjobbing. This kind of traffic, that had been rising in frequency as the national debt increased, was become extremely prevalent, and was indeed very much encouraged by the successive ministers of George; who seeing that jobbing kept up the price of the stocks, considered it as a very beneficial practice. There seemed, indeed, to be a kind of enthusiasm of avarice throughout maritime and commercial Europe at this time, no less vio-

⁵ It was upon the anxiety of the British government about the relative strength of its neighbours, that the author of the History of John Bull introduces his hero as keeping a pair of steelyards to weigh his neighbours.

lent than the religious or political enthusiasm of other periods. Money was the supreme object of their thoughts; they considered projects of new banks; new schemes of administering or employing established funds; and new modes of traffic, as the means of miraculous accumulation.^b On the phrenzy of covetousness which impeded the use of sound reason, and generated the most visionary fancies, the deep and designing villany of ministerial projectors contrived the famous South Sea bubble, that burst with such destruction to its deluded votaries. Notwithstanding the ruin which overwhelmed so many from this speculation, there continued a strong propensity to wild and fanciful adventures, for many years afterwards. Stockjobbing very naturally promotes other species of gaming,ⁱ either to increase its gains, or compensate its losses. Gambling became much more frequent than it had been in former times.

and stimulates its votaries to ruinous adventures.
South Sea bubble.

THE liberal principles and sentiments of the whigs, extending toleration to the various sects of religionists, continued hateful to the high church; nor were the whigs behind in enmity; their aversion to bigotry carried them into the opposite extreme. Many of them are justly chargeable with infidelity; and their leading politicians, if not unbelievers, were indifferent about religion, and great patrons of infidels. The court, in general, was very lukewarm in religious matters. With the minister, himself, his supporters and favourites, articles, of faith, the church, and clergy, were most frequent and acceptable subjects of merriment and raillery. Impiety was extremely fashionable in the various gradations of society, to which the court example did not fail to reach. Corresponding to such a state of religion, there was great laxity of manners. To this evil, the conduct of the court had its share in contributing. George, though by no means profligate in his own character, yet tended to encourage licentious gallantry: according to the mode of debauched courts on the continent, the king's mistresses made their appearance regularly among

Religious infidelity.

Immorality.

^b Besides the famous South Sea scheme, there was the Mississippi plan of Mr. Law, and numberless others on the same visionary principle, though less extensive in influence and importance.

ⁱ See *Life of Bage*, in Bisset's edition of the *Spectator*.

the nobility,^k were visited by women of the highest rank and fashion, and even introduced to the young princesses his grand daughters. The minister, and all who possessed or sought favour, paid the most submissive attention to the royal favourites. Where such persons presided, modesty and chastity could not be expected greatly to prevail. Decency and morality were by no means characteristics of George's court.

Advances
of com-
merce and
prosperity
under
George.

THIS reign was favourable to commerce and finance, especially after the appointment of Walpole, to be prime minister. The policy of this statesman, constantly and steadily pacific, was, by that single but momentous quality, conducive to private and public opulence. Raised to office immediately after the failure of the South Sea scheme, he studiously and earnestly endeavoured to repair the mischiefs produced by that celebrated fraud, and was successful in his efforts. Having settled the business of the South Sea, and restored public credit, he directed his attention to manufactures and trade, and showed that his views were both liberal and extensive. He found the foreign trade shackled with numerous petty duties and impoverishing taxes, which obstructed the exportation of our manufactures, and lessened the importation of the most necessary commodities. He framed the beneficial plan of abolishing all these restrictions, and giving freedom to the most valuable branches of our external and internal commerce.^l At his instance, a bill was passed for that purpose. By his persuasion also, a law was enacted for encouraging the importation of naval stores from North America. Since these commodities were necessary for the navy, he thought it much wiser to be supplied from our own plantations, especially as we could be furnished at a cheaper rate, and as our colonies took our own manufactures in exchange. Besides, should England be at war with Russia, that source of naval stores might be closed; by Walpole's regulation, another was opened. The promotion of commerce was one great object of his pacific dispositions: he was very averse to hostilities with Spain when threatened in 1726, through the unnatural union

Liberal po-
licy of
Walpole.

^k See Lord Orford's Reminiscences.

^l See Coxe's Memoirs of sir Robert Walpole, part i. p. 164.

between Philip and the emperor. The commerce with Spain was very extensive and important to Great Britain. Such a source of revenue and riches he was unwilling to obstruct by precipitate war. His views of the benefits arising from our foreign settlements, just and sound, presented a lesson of colonial polity, which it would have been fortunate for Britain if his successors had always followed. A speculative projector having proposed, that the American plantations should be subject to taxes, Walpole, with a discriminating and comprehensive idea of their real utility, saw that without impost, by their industry and prosperity, they were rapidly promoting the private wealth and public revenue of Britain, and totally rejected the advice. His views of colonies

In the contests between king George and his son the prince of Wales, Walpole, though he could not avoid giving some umbrage to the heir apparent, yet impressed both him and his princess Caroline with a very high opinion of his political talent. When, on the king's death, George II. ascended the throne, Walpole was continued in his office, because their majesties^m thought no other person could be found so well qualified for directing the helm of public affairs.

GEORGE II., a prince of upright intentions and the strictest honour, but of moderate talents, and inferior to his father in force of understanding, adopted his political notions and prejudices; considered the whigs as the only subjects, to be trusted; entertained groundless alarms of the designs of the jacobites; and renewed or formed numerous alliances for securing the protestant succession.ⁿ He was anxiously and incessantly busy with engagements and projects for preserving the balance of power, and very partial to the interest of his German dominions. The minister, adhering to his pacific plans, gratified his master by promoting German alliances and subsidies, but prevented the George II. adopts the internal and foreign policy of his father.

^m From Lord Orford's Reminiscences, it appears that the king intended to choose a new minister; but that the queen, greatly his superior in abilities, and who governed his majesty, though she appeared to be implicitly submissive to him, induced him to continue Walpole in office.

ⁿ The prince of Hesse, the duke of Wolfenbuttle, and other petty princes of Germany, gravely undertook to guarantee the throne of Britain, and received subsidies for their notable services! See Smollet, *passim*; see also the comments of the Craftsman; and Fog's Journal.

nation from being embroiled in war. Some of his treaties were deemed very impolitic, especially the treaty of Seville, by which Britain introduced a branch of the house of Bourbon into Italy, and depressed the house of Austria, the natural ally of England.

SKILFUL as he was in forming productive schemes of finance, Walpole's public economy was by no means equal to his invention or discovery of pecuniary resources. There was, indeed, a profuse waste of the national treasures. Trade had greatly increased, and many new taxes had been imposed; yet in so long a period of profound peace, which underwent no material interruption from the treaty of Utrecht to the commencement of the war 1739, the whole sum paid off was no more than 8,328,354l. 17s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and the capital of the public debt at that time amounted to 46,954,623l. 3s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. A great source of expenditure was what the minister called secret service money, by which he professed to mean sums required for discovering the secret intentions of neighbouring powers. This fund, according to the minister's account, was extremely useful in enabling him to discover and disconcert the wicked projects of jacobites, and their friends, in foreign countries. Another great source of expense, the subsidies to German principalities for watching over the safety, interest, and established government of Great Britain, was also, by the minister's account, to be reckoned a premium paid for ensuring the kingdom against jacobites. The balance of power also had its share in exacting subsidies from England. The British statesmen at that time, indeed, appear to have considered the maintenance of an equipoise, as the supreme and constant END of our foreign politics, instead of a means sometimes necessary for the security of Britain, and only when necessary, wisely employing British efforts. Although by the act of settlement it was provided, that Britain should not be involved in any engagements on account of Hanover, yet various treaties and stipulations were made, by which expense was incurred by these realms on account of that electorate. The protestant succession, and balance of power, were also ministerial reasons for the regular and constant maintenance of a much greater number of troops.

Expense
of subsidi-
ary trea-
ties.

within the kingdom, than the apparent state of internal tranquillity and foreign politics rendered necessary. Cardinal Fleury, as pacifically disposed as the British minister, and having unlimited control over the weak and incapable Lewis XV., cultivated a friendly intercourse with England. The emperor found it his interest to resume his connexions with Great Britain, in order to secure the pragmatic sanction, by which his hereditary dominions were guaranteed to his daughter, his only issue. Spain interfering with certain parts of our trade on coasts, to which she pretended an exclusive right, employed no efforts which a naval force, vigilantly exerted and judiciously stationed, might not have prevented. Other states were either too inconsiderable, or too remote, to give any alarm to Great Britain, or to render any unusual military exertions necessary. The taxes required by the minister for defraying expenses, deemed by a considerable part of the nation useless, were felt as severe grievances. The regular and increasing pressure, however, caused much less displeasure and alarm, than one of the modes proposed for levying the imposts; this scheme of establishing an excise on wine and tobacco, though if the assessments were at all necessary, as productive, and as little burdensome^a a means of collection, as could be adopted in such subjects of revenue; yet, from party ardour and misrepresentation, combined with the interest of smuggling merchants, raised such a clamour as would have driven him from his office unless he had abandoned his proposition.

High taxes, notwithstanding the long peace.

THE opponents of his administration, or any of his counsels, the minister affected to consider as enemies of the state; and succeeded in impressing that opinion on many patriotic and loyal subjects, and also on the king himself, who, possessing honest intentions and not great sagacity of understanding, was credulous, and easily duped by the professions of those whom he regarded as his friends. The ability of Walpole did not only convince the king, that the adversaries of the minister were the enemies of the house of Hanover, and of the protestant succession but even imprinted the same notion on the superior penetration of the queen. Caroline, indeed, as is now well

State of parties.

^a See Wealth of Nations, vol. iii. p. 358.

known, was the chief supporter of Walpole, as she was the supreme director of his majesty.^p But, with the address of a stronger mind governing by influence a weaker, she cautiously concealed from the king himself her power over his public measures. Walpole established with the court party the following doctrine: "Whoever opposes this whig administration is a tory; all tories are jacobites; every one, therefore, that opposes the minister, is a jacobite." So much is the generality of mankind governed by words instead of precise ideas, that many expressed their approbation of secret service money, foreign subsidies, the increase of the army, and frequent suspension of the *habeas corpus*, to demonstrate that they were not jacobites. The minister, indeed, was supported by the principal whig families, by those who, styling themselves the whig connexion, have professed to think that they, and they only, supported the principles of constitutional liberty and the protestant succession; and, therefore, that they only ought to be intrusted with the administration of affairs under the house of Hanover. This combination was strengthened and consolidated by domestic affinities. The great whig houses, by an extensive chain of inter-marriages, formed a kind of family compact, subservient to their political schemes for governing the state. Walpole held his office by various tenures: his own abilities, and his declared attachment to whig principles and the protestant succession; his efforts for keeping out the pretender, and supporting the moneyed interest; for extending commerce, and improving revenue, and maintaining the balance of power: he was farther strengthened by the whig junto, guided by his talents and address; the high opinion and attachment of the king and queen, and the conviction of both that his counsels chiefly and most effectually secured them on the throne. He rivetted the confidence of George, by the zealous promotion of his electoral and subsidising projects. He possessed many personal friends, whom he had attached to himself by his conduct, the apparent openness and familiar ease of his manners, by accumulated benefits, and especially by a liberal and judicious

Whig connexion.

^p See Lord Orford's Reminiscences, and Coxe's Memoirs of sir Robert Walpole, *passim*.

distribution of secret service-money. He had also, through the last mentioned means, a very numerous body of supporters in LITERARY MEN, at least in *writers*, who in various departments of composition, historical,^q political, theological, in lyric and dramatic poetry,^r praised the ministerial plans, and vilified the opponents of government. Perhaps, indeed, in the history of literature, never had so many pens been employed in panegyrising a court or ministry, as while sir Robert Walpole directed the helm of affairs.

Walpole's
literary
supporters.

WITH such intrinsic and extrinsic power, Walpole continued longer in office,^s than any minister since the Cecil of Elizabeth. In all that time, he had experienced great opposition, and uniformly resisted attacks with an ability and address that very dexterously adapted themselves to the changing nature and mode of political enmity which he had to encounter. Though the minister endeavoured to represent the opposer of his schemes as the supporter of the pretender, he very thoroughly knew that the greater number were not friends to the house of Stuart. The adversaries of Walpole consisted of different, and indeed heterogeneous, classes of political men. First, there were discontented whigs, who disapproved of his measures; and repined at the preference given to sir Robert Walpole over themselves: secondly, the tories, who were displeased at the exclusive promotion of the whigs, but not inimical to the house of Hanover: and thirdly, the jacobites. Though these last were unfriendly to the family on the throne, many of them contented themselves with wishes, and appeared nowise disposed to hazard their own lives and fortunes in order to elevate the pretender to the throne. They adhered to the tories, in hopes with them to foment and increase national discontent. Expectations had arisen on different occasions, that the minister's downfall approached: the tories and the opposition whigs respectively hoped to succeed, but both were disappointed. The splendid genius of Bolingbroke, now pardoned and returned from exile, animated and directed the tories; while the acute and strong understanding, brilliant wit;

Opposition
to Wal-
pole.

Boling-
broke.

^q Tindal, Oldmixon, &c. ^r Eusden, Cibber, &c. Of pamphlets, periodical journals, and political sermons, there was a vast multiplicity of writers.

^s From his second appointment in 1720, to his dismissal in 1741.

Pulteney vigorous and impressive eloquence of Pulteney, headed the disaffected whigs. Different as these two classes were in abstract political opinion, yet they concurred in present object and proximate motive: they both desired to overthrow the minister. The jacobites were no less desirous of the dismissal of the whig connexion, and Walpole individually. A coalition was now deemed expedient: and the antiministerialists, with Bolingbroke and Pulteney at their head, became one united body; the former being the chief framer of their schemes, the latter the most active and efficient agent in parliament. Their plan of operations was, by the union of parliamentary and literary talents and their combined influence, first to sap, and then destroy the power of Walpole. In the execution of their plan, they set on foot the celebrated **Craftsman**, which, with great and comprehensive ability, viewed the various causes of discontent, and, with versatile ingenuity, adapted itself to the numerous classes of the discontented. This paper attracted high churchmen, by ridiculing and satirising low churchmen, whig bishops, and particularly Hoadley. Reprobating the impolicy and iniquity of continental alliances and subsidies; secret service money, taxes, and stock-jobbing; the mischiefs that arose from a funding system, the anticipation of future industry, and the immense mass of corruption which ministers had established through the command of so much national treasure; and the evils of the South Sea scheme, cotemporary and subsequent bubbles, all which originated in the national debt; it gratified the tories. To please the jacobites, it exposed the expensive inconvenience and uselessness of engagements incurred by Britain for the sake of Hanover; and exhibited the present government as in its conduct totally opposite to the principles and stipulations of the act of settlement. To the whigs it appealed, upon their own genuine and original doctrines and sentiments. The present administration had, by unexampled corruption, established an influence more despotical, than the power which the most tyrannical of the Stuarts ever sought. Through corrupt legislators, the influence of the crown invaded our property by exorbitant taxes, totally unnecessary for the security of the country, and employed the money, either for bribery,

**The
Craftsman.**

the increase of a standing army, or some other means of giving efficacy to ministry, at the expense of British liberty and property. The promoters of boundless kingly power, by whatever means, direct or indirect, must be vigorously opposed by every real whig: the supporters of ministry were only nominal and pretended whigs, whose great object it was to extend the influence of the executive government. These varied reasons, addressed to different political classes, the ablest men of opposition, both in parliament and the *Craftsman*, as well as in subordinate publications, adapted to particular subjects, occasions, and circumstances. Accommodating their strictures to the political diversities of Englishmen, they spoke also to principles in which they were very generally agreed. They addressed their mercantile and warlike spirit; they inveighed against the depredations of the Spaniards, as injurious to our national interest; and our long and tame sufferance of these, as incompatible with national honour. At last they succeeded in driving the nation to war with Spain, and compelling Walpole to retire from the administration of British affairs.

War with
Spain.

THAT dexterous politician, knowing the nation to be incensed against him, when he saw that it would be impossible for him any longer to retain his office, found means to secure an indemnity and a peerage; to divide the party that had exerted itself so long, eagerly, and strenuously, against his measures; and to form a coalition with a considerable body of his adversaries. By this means, he ensured the undisturbed enjoyment of his riches and honours. The people thought themselves betrayed by the late declaimers against ministerial corruption; and in their resentment toward those whom they branded as apostates from patriotism, forgot their rage against sir Robert Walpole. The administration that was now formed consisted chiefly of whigs, with some tory converts. They engaged warmly in continental politics, and, in a great degree, merely to gratify his majesty's electoral prepossessions, involved the nation in war much farther than was necessary for the security of Britain.^t They encouraged trea-

Walpole
resigns.

^t See Smollett, vol. i. chap. 7. *passim*.

ties and subsidies for purposes totally useless to the country, though requiring immense sums of British money; and they supported the introduction of foreign mercenaries for guarding and defending England.

Continental affairs.

FRANCE having, by long peace and prosperous commerce, repaired the strength that had been exhausted by the splendid but infatuated ambition of Lewis XIV., resumed her usual character, and disturbed the tranquillity of the continent. The death of the emperor afforded her a favourable opportunity of interfering in the affairs of Germany; and, notwithstanding her accession to the pragmatic sanction, of endeavouring to wrest possessions from the queen of Hungary. The critical situation of the house of Austria rendered it expedient for Great Britain to employ a considerable force to prevent Maria Teresa from being overpowered. From the loyal and patriotic zeal of her gallant subjects, together with the contributions of Great Britain, the Austrian dominions were soon delivered from the impending danger. Thus far impartial politicians approved of British interference; but when vast sums of money were expended for adjusting disputes in the north of Germany, by which it was impossible the interest of Britain could be either directly or indirectly affected, very great discontents arose. Under the pressure of enormous taxes, the people grievously complained, that a great portion of the fruits of their industry were employed to promote the interests of Hanover, and afforded the contributors no advantage in return for their contributions. In the ardour of continental projects, the British government bestowed very inadequate attention on the chief bulwark of British power. Our commerce was much more annoyed than at any former period, even while we had to contend with Spain only as principal. France having soon without provocation taken a part in the war, our trade was extremely distressed. The merchants loudly complained that their interests were neglected, and joined in an outcry against the electoral prepossessions of the king, to which they said our commerce and navy were sacrificed. The employment at this time of a great body of Hanoverian troops within this island, added to the dissatisfaction of the nation; and the Hanoverians became extremely

British interference in German politics.

unpopular. The jacobites, seeing the prevailing sentiment, earnestly promoted the discontent; but conceived it to be much greater than it eventually proved. They exaggerated the displeasure which was excited by the king's supposed preference of Hanoverian to British interest, and construed it into a dislike of the house of Hanover, in hopes that the dissatisfaction might pave the way for the reestablishment of the house of Stuart on the British throne. Foreign powers conceived the same idea, and France attempted an invasion. The naval force of England, however, began now to be better directed, and easily crushed every open attempt of the enemy.

1744.
Hostilities
with
France.

THE arrival of the young pretender the following year, proved that royalty and patriotism in British hearts, when the king and country are attacked, absorb all partial discontents. The young adventurer, supported by a strong band of heroic though misguided votaries,^a found that every attempt was and would be unavailing, to ascend a throne which was confirmed to another by the free choice and interest of the people. Common danger abolished all distinctions; whigs and tories, churchmen and dissenters, united against an inroad which threatened the subversion of the constitution and the plunder of property. Government experienced from the funded system one of the chief political advantages which its first authors had predicted. The great numbers who were interested in supporting national credit, vigorously exerted themselves to support the cause with which they considered private and public prosperity as identified. In opposing rebellion, and supporting their lawful and constitutional king, they knew and felt they were supporting their liberty, their property, their families, and themselves. The rebellion in 1745 proved a most favourable crisis to the house of Hanover. It marked the difference between disapprobation of certain measures of his majesty or his ministers, and disaffection to the title and government of the house of Brunswick. Britons saw, regretted, and censured, the king's predilection for his German territories, and the expense and trouble in which they involved this country; but they dis-

1745.
Attempt of
the young
Pretender,

unites all
parties in
supporting
the king
and consti-
tution.

^a See Home's History of the Rebellion in 1745.

cerned that this was only a temporary inconvenience, arising from George II. individually, as it had from his father, but not likely to descend to future representatives of the family of Hanover. The reigning king was not only born in Hanover, but educated there in all the notions and sentiments of the country, and had never left it until he passed his thirtieth year; a period at which the characters of men are formed, matured, and ascertained. It was therefore natural for George to cherish Hanover, once the only object of his expected inheritance, and to attend to its interests much more than was wise and politic in a king of Great Britain. The whigs, whom he had long considered as the props of his kingly power, and who had, from the time of William, been favourable to continental connexions, readily coincided in his electoral projects, and encouraged his costly scheme of subsidizing foreign states to fight their own battles, or the battles of other powers whose success was not necessary to the security of Britain. Frederick prince of Wales, heir of the crown, was a child,^v when his grandfather ascended the throne of Britain. Having early imbibed English ideas, he was inimical to such a multiplicity of continental engagements and expensive subsidies, and averse to that policy of his father and grandfather which conferred offices of high trust on one party exclusively. Hence it was expected that when providence should call him to the throne, he would be less partial to his Hanoverian dominions, and less disposed to an interference in German politics. The prince had a numerous family, who, being all natives of England, were brought up from their infancy in the opinions and sentiments of Englishmen. Eminent for domestic virtues, his highness and his princess directed their chief attention to the tuition of their children, and especially to initiate their heir in the opinions, principles, sentiments, and dispositions, befitting a personage destined to be sovereign of Great Britain. The rebellion also demonstrated that the house of Brunswick was not supported by a party only, but by the British nation; and probably ad-

Natural for George II. to be partial to the whigs.

Frederick Prince of Wales, resolves to employ talents and merit without respect of party.

and instills his sentiments into prince George.

^v He was born January 1707; and was in the eighth year of his age at the accession, Aug. 1st, 1714.

ded strength to the former conviction of the heir of the crown, that a king placed on the throne of Britain should rule for all his subjects, and choose servants according to merit, and not party creeds; and confirmed his determination to infuse the same doctrine into his eldest son.

THE measures speedily adopted for preventing future rebellion, effected a most important and happy change in the northern part of the united kingdom. The overthrow of aristocratical tyranny in the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions, established law and order, extended constitutional liberty, secured property, stimulated industry, and contributed powerfully to civilize the Highlanders, and turn to beneficial efforts that bold energy of character which had hitherto been chiefly exerted in depredations, feuds, and insurrections. So strongly exhibiting the striking and prominent virtues, the intrepid courage, the indefatigable activity, the invincible hardiness, the unshaken fidelity," and ardent attachments of those generous mountaineers, actuated by a mistaken principle, pointed them out, when they should be better informed and more fortunately guided, as powerful contributors to the benefit, honour, and glory of Britain.*

Improvement of Scotland.

IN her continental exertions, Britain in this tedious war displayed her usual courage, and incurred enormous expense, without accomplishing any purpose tending to compensate her profusion of blood and treasure, her bravest soldiers, betrayed and deserted by faithless allies, were far outnumbered by their enemies; but, though fre-

w Never did this quality appear more conspicuously eminent and honourable, than in the escape of the unfortunate chevalier; which we cannot better mark than in the words of Smollett: "He (Charles Stuart) was obliged to trust his life to the fidelity of above fifty individuals, and many of these were in the lowest paths of fortune. They knew that a price of thirty thousand pounds was set upon his head; and that, by betraying him, they should enjoy wealth and affluence: but they detested the thought of obtaining riches on such infamous terms; and ministered to his necessities with the utmost zeal and fidelity, even at the hazard of their own destruction." Vol. iii. p. 9.

x As various Highland chieftains were at this time favourable to king George, their respective clans rendered important services in the course of the rebellion. Selected companies had been already formed into a regular corps; and at Fontenoy, where they first saw an enemy, the forty-second regiment began the tenure of heroism, which through four successive wars they have so uniformly and illustriously displayed, from Fontenoy to Alexandria.

quently worsted, they never received a complete and decisive defeat.¹

On their own element, Britons, totally unencumbered with allies, could exert and direct their most valuable force; and although by the remissness of ministers, and the negligence, incapacity, or quarrels of commanders, they performed few brilliant or important exploits in the first years of the war; yet, through the remainder, they were victorious in every quarter, and showed the house of Bourbon, how vain and pernicious to themselves were their attempts to cope with the navy of England.

Peace of
Aix-la-
Chapelle.

THE peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, concluded on the general principle of reciprocal restitution, without any indemnification to either party for the immense expense and severe losses which the belligerent powers respectively incurred, demonstrated that the two principal contributors, France and England, had grievously suffered by the contest. To the national debt of England, a war of nine years had added 31,338,689l. 18s. 6½d.;² so that the whole debt at this time amounted to 78,293,313l. 1s. 10¾d. The addition to French debt, no less considerable, tended to prove, that a war producing such an incumbrance, besides the interruption of commerce and bringing no equivalent, was extremely hurtful to both parties, to the aggressor as much as the defender.

War be-
tween Eng-
land and
France,
pernicious
to both.

Mr. Pel-
ham.

THE commercial genius of England rose superior to all interruptions and disadvantages from her political plans. During the last five years of the war, trade had made extraordinary advances; money poured into the kingdom, and private enterprise and public credit rose to an unprecedented height. Mr. Pelham, now chief minister, possessing great industry and financial skill, very zealously and successfully promoted the extension of national credit and commerce. Aware of the benefits resulting to Britain from trade with Spain, he cultivated an amicable and close intercourse with that country. He encouraged fisheries, manufactures, and colonization,³ the benefits of

¹ Even at Fontenoy, the French killed and wounded considerably exceeded the number of the British; and our army was able to make an orderly retreat, without the loss of their camp. See Smollett, vol. iii. p. 548.

² See James Postlethwaite's History of the Public Revenue.

³ See Smollett vol. iii. from p. 65 to 159.

which have ever since been felt. But the measure by which his administration is principally distinguished, was the reduction of the public interest, with the consent and approbation of the creditors, from four to three per cent. His scheme for this purpose, which would have been totally impracticable unless commerce had been flourishing, money abounding, and the funds very high, was executed with great ease and popularity. The greater number of creditors, having the option of being paid the principal or lowering the interest, chose the latter alternative. Mr. Pelham, indeed, though not distinguished for force or brilliancy of genius, was upright in intention, and indefatigable in application, always directing his understanding to subjects and exertions within the compass of his abilities. Though bred up in party notions, being candid and moderate he employed coadjutors and agents without regard to their political party, and was one of the most useful ministers that ever improved the blessings of peace to an industrious and commercial people. This peace, however, was destined to be but of short continuance; for Europe was soon engaged in a war, more general and extensive than any in which it had ever before been involved.

Rapid increase of commerce and prosperity from the blessings of peace.

THE origin, proximate causes, principles, plans, events and results, of this war, to the accession of George III. with the state in which they placed Britain, are particularly detailed in the first chapter of this History.



HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

CHAP. I.

*Rise, Progress, Operations, and Results of the war 1756,
to the accession of George III.*

A LIBERAL and expanded policy would have suggested to France, which experienced so little advantage from her wars and ambition, the wisdom of permanent peace. She might thus have cultivated the arts of which her country was so susceptible, and by an intercourse with England, might have improved her commerce and her naval skill. She might have raised herself by industry and beneficial enterprise, instead of seeking to humble her neighbours by efforts at once ineffectual against their object and ruinous to herself. But if she did prefer aggression and war to peace and prosperity, she might have learned from awful experience, that her success had arisen, and must arise, from continental effort, in which she might be and was superior to any power; instead of maritime effort, in which she was and must be inferior to one power.

ANOTHER scheme of policy remained; which was, to direct her chief attention to commerce and navigation, in order to rival and surpass England. She saw that colonial establishments very extensively and powerfully promoted our commercial and naval preeminence. Her statesmen, confounding effect with cause, supposed our prosperity to have arisen from our plantations: whereas those flourishing settlements, with many other constituents of opulence

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I.

Schemes of
France against the
British colonies.

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I.

and power, were really results from skilful industry, acquiring capital under fostering freedom, and thus rapidly increasing and extending its power of operation. They concluded, that the effectual means of out-rivalling Britain, was to reduce her colonial possessions. This object count de Maurepas the French minister proposed; and for this purpose formed a plan, which, ever since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, operated in various parts of the world, but first and chiefly in North America.

North
America.

DURING the seventeenth century neither France nor England was sufficiently acquainted with the geography of America, to ascertain with precision the limits of their respective claims. In treaties^b between the two crowns, after general stipulations to abstain from encroachment, the adjustment of bounds had been intrusted to commissioners. Even at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the American limits were still left to be settled as before, and thus a ground remained open for future contention. Though the line of demarcation had never yet been ascertained on the frontiers of British America, yet, rapidly flourishing on the coasts, the colonists sought a new source of wealth from the remotely interior country. They cultivated the Indian trade, for which their navigable lakes and rivers opened an easy and expeditious conveyance. Extending to the west of the Alleghany mountains, our planters conceived that we had a right to navigate the Mississippi, opening another communication between English America and the ocean. With these views, a company of merchants and planters obtained a considerable tract of land near the river Ohio,^c but within the province of Virginia; and were established by a charter, under the name of the Ohio Company, with the exclusive privilege of trading to that river. This was a measure by no means agreeable to the court of Versailles: the French had projected an engrossment of the whole fur trade of the American continent, and had already made considerable progress, by extending a chain of forts from the Mississippi, along the lakes Erie and

1752.

^b See the treaties of Rhyswick and Utrecht.

^c So far back as 1716, the governor of Virginia had formed a project of a mercantile company to be established on the Ohio; but the relative politics of George I. and the duke of Orleans, prevented the king from granting a charter.

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1752.
Encroach-
ments of
France.

Ontario, to Canada and St. Laurence. Incensed at the interference of the English in a traffic which his countrymen purposed to monopolize, the governor of Quebec wrote letters to the governors of New York and Pennsylvania, informing them, that as the English inland traders had encroached on the French territories and privileges, by trading with the Indians under the protection of his sovereign, he would seize them wherever they could be found, if they did not immediately desist from that illicit practice.^d A denunciation of punishment for the infringement of an alleged right, neither admitted nor proved, met with no attention from the English governors. The Frenchman, finding his complaints disregarded, next year ordered three of the British traders to be seized and carried to Quebec. He confiscated the goods of the accused, and sent the men to Rochelle in France, where they were detained in confinement. The earl of Albemarle, ambassador at Versailles, remonstrated to the French ministry on the unjust confinement of British subjects, and procured their release, with promises from the French ministry, that no grounds of complaint should be suffered to continue; but the insincerity of those professions was soon manifested by the conduct of their servants, which was afterwards commended and justified by the court. Meanwhile the French, pursuing their plan of encroachment, built forts on the territories of Indian tribes in alliance with Britain, at Niagara, on lake Erie, in the back settlements of New York and Pennsylvania. The governor of Virginia, informed of these depredations, sent major George Washington, since so illustrious, with a letter to the commandant of a French fort recently built within the confines of his province. The encroachments, he said, were contrary to the law of nations, repugnant to existing treaties between the two crowns, and injurious to the interests of British subjects. He asked by whose authority the territories of his Britannic majesty were invaded, and required that he should evacuate the country, and not farther disturb the harmony which his sovereign wished to subsist between himself and the French king.

1753.

^d See Smollett, vol. iii. p. 201.

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I

1755.

The French commandant replied, that it did not belong to him to discuss the right of his master to the territories in question; that he commanded the fort by order of his general the marquis du Quesne; that he would transmit the letter to him, act according to his directions, and maintain the fort, unless commanded by his general to relinquish possession. The English governor now projected a fort to be built on the Riviere Aubeuf, in the neighbourhood of that which the French had recently erected; and the Virginians undertook to provide the stores, and defray the expense.

IN more northern parts of British America, the same schemes of encroachment were carried on, with a consistency of design, and perseverance in execution, which evinced that both emanated from one uniform and vigorous plan.

Settlement
of Nova
Scotia.

AT the peace of Utrecht, Acadia had been ceded by the French to the English; but before the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle it had turned to very little account. During the administration of Mr. Pelham, so auspicious to commerce and revenue, a scheme was formed for rendering this province a beneficial acquisition. An establishment was proposed, which should clear the improvable grounds, constitute communities, diffuse the benefits of population and agriculture, and promote navigation and the fishery. The design having been approved by his majesty, the earl of Halifax, a nobleman of good understanding and liberal sentiments, and at that time president of the board of trade, was intrusted with the execution. Officers and private men, dismissed from the land and sea service, were invited by offers of ground in different proportions, according to their rank, with additional considerations according to the number and increase of their families. A civil government was established, under which they were to enjoy the liberties and privileges of British subjects. The settlers were to be conveyed to the place of destination, and maintained for a year at the expense of government. From the same source they were to be supplied with arms and ammunition for defence, as well as with materials and utensils for agriculture, fishery, and other means of subsistence. In May 1749, the adventurers set

sail from England, and in the latter end of June arrived at the harbour of Chebucto. This port is at once secure and commodious; it has a communication with most parts of the province, either by land carriage, navigable rivers, or the sea, and is peculiarly well situated for fishery. Here governor Cornwallis pitched on a spot for a settlement, and laid the foundation of a town, the building of which he commenced on a regular plan, and gave it the name of Halifax, in honour of its noble patron.

THE actual advantage to accrue from the colonization of Nova Scotia, which must be contingent or at least distant, appears to have had less share in inducing Britain to make the establishment, than the desire of securing it from being repossessed by the French; as they, if again masters of the country, might very much annoy the more southern colonies, which were then rapidly flourishing. The French, regarding the new colony with jealousy and displeasure, as promoting the advantage of Britain, and counteracting their own views, did not themselves at first disturb the new settlers, but instigated the Indians to give them every annoyance.

Jealousy of
the
French.

WHEN Halifax was built, the Indians were spirited to commit hostilities against the inhabitants, some of whom they murdered, and others they carried prisoners to Louisburg, where they sold them for arms and ammunition. The French pretended that they maintained this traffic from motives of pure compassion, in order to prevent the massacre of the English captives; whom, however, they did not set at liberty, without exacting an enormous price. These marauders, it was found, were generally headed by French commanders. When complaints were made to the governor of Louisburg, he answered, that these Indians were not within his jurisdiction.

THE commissioners appointed to ascertain the limits of the two powers met repeatedly; but the pretensions of the French were so exorbitant, and so totally inconsistent with the letter and spirit of treaties, and the generally understood description of the countries, that they plainly perceived that every attempt to establish amicably a fair demarcation would be vain.* The governor

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of Canada detached an officer with a party of men to fortify a post in the bay of Chenecto, within the English Nova Scotia, under the pretence of its constituting a part of the French territory. Besides being a palpable invasion of a British possession, this was productive of a two-fold evil to the new colony. When Acadia had been ceded to the crown of England, Annapolis was the chief town, and indeed continued so till the building of Halifax. Many of the French families that inhabited the town under their native government, were suffered, and chose to continue in it, and in fact became British subjects. Not a few, however, still retained their predilection for their mother country, were closely connected with the French establishments in Cape Breton and Canada, and were active partisans in instigating the Indians to molest the English colonists. Encouraged by the vicinity of the fort now raised, they became openly rebellious. By the fortification of the same post, the Indians also acquired an easy access into the peninsula, to annoy, plunder, capture, and massacre the subjects of England.

In spring 1750, general Cornwallis detached major Lawrence with a small body of men to reduce the Annapolitans to obedience; but at his approach they burnt their town, forsook their possessions, and sought protection from monsieur la Corne, who was at the head of fifteen hundred men, well supplied with arms and ammunition. Major Lawrence, knowing that he was unable to cope with such a force in the open field, demanded an interview with the French commandant, and asked on what principle he protected the rebellious subjects of Great Britain? La Corne, without entering into any discussion, merely replied, that he was ordered to defend that post, and would obey his orders. The major found it necessary to return to Halifax, and lay the proceedings of the French before the governor. The Annapolitans, better known by the name of the French Neutrals, in conjunction with the Indians, renewed their depredations upon the inhabitants of Halifax, and of other settlements in the province. Incensed at the ingratitude of the French Neutrals towards that country which for near forty years had afforded them the most liberal protection, general

Hostilities
of the
French
Neutrals
and In-
dians.

Cornwallis determined to expel them from a country which they now so much disturbed. He accordingly detached major Lawrence with a thousand men, attacked the Neutrals and Indians, routed them, and killed and wounded a considerable number, until they took refuge with M. la Corne. This gentleman, an officer under the French king, and commanding that monarch's troops, gave shelter and assistance to rebels against the British government, then at peace with his sovereign. The English built a fort not far from Chenecto, called St. Lawrence, after its founder, and this served in some degree to keep the French and their auxiliary barbarians in check. Still, however, the Indians and Neutrals^f were able very often to attack the English in the interior parts of the peninsula. During the years 1751 and 1752, the Indians and their coadjutors continued to disturb, plunder, and butcher the new colonists. In their expeditions they were countenanced and supported by the French commanders, who always supplied them with boats, arms and ammunition. While the French thus stimulated and assisted the enemies of our country, they were no less active and persevering themselves in encroachment, and continued to erect forts within the English limits, to secure their own inroads and aggressions. They projected, and in a great degree finished, a chain of posts in the north, as they had erected and were erecting a similar chain in the south. It was obviously the intention of the French to command the whole interior country from the river St. Lawrence to the Mississippi, and thereby to prevent intercourse between the Indians and the English colonies: in peace to command all the Indian trade, and in war to enable themselves to make continual inroads upon the English, and to have the whole assistance of the Indians to annoy and devastate the British plantations. Thus they proposed to surround our settlements by a strong and comprehensive line on every side but that next the sea, so as not only to contract our bounds and reduce their productiveness, but

French
scheme of
aggression.

^f At the cession of Acadia to England, a considerable number of its French colonists had, as we have before observed, been permitted to remain in the country, on engaging to yield allegiance to Britain, and undertaking to be neutral in any subsequent dispute between Britain and France; and thence they received the name of Neutrals.

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1753.
Operation
and pro-
gress.

to have the means of progressively advancing to the coast, and depriving us of our most valuable possessions. This was their grand scheme of territorial and commercial acquisition in North America; in which they had made very considerable progress, before Britain took effectual steps to check their encroachments. Such was the state of affairs in 1753.

1754.
British go-
vernment
demands
satisfaction
of France.

THE British government, by repeated representations, was made sensible that the encroachments of France were extremely important; and it was soon discovered, that, besides the other advantages which would accrue to that nation from the transfer of so much of our American trade, and the enclosure of our colonies, she would rapidly enhance the value of her West India islands. A reference to treaties proved, that these pretensions were as contrary to justice, as the resources of the country demonstrated them to be hurtful to our interests. Unwilling, however, to have recourse to hostilities without previously demanding satisfaction, George instructed his ambassador at Versailles to state the grievance, and require redress. The ambassador accordingly represented the injuries which had been sustained by British subjects, through the instigation of the French, and the aggressions made by their governors, in entering our territories and building forts within British limits. He demanded the indemnification of the sufferers, the punishment of the aggressors, and the transmission of orders^g to prevent future violence and invasion, and to demolish the forts already erected. The French court gave general promises of sending such instructions to its officers in America, as would preclude every future cause of just complaint. So far, however, was that court from being sincere in its professions, that de la Jonquiere, commander in chief, proceeded more rapidly than before to extend the encroachments. Britain, finding how little the conduct of France tallied with her professions, resolved to assume a different tone, and despatched orders to the governors of America to repel force by force, and to form a political confederacy for their mutual defence.

Receives
an evasive
answer,
and re-
solves to
repel force
by force.

It was an important object to England, to detach the Indians from their connexion with France, and procure

their cooperation with the British settlements. The governor of New York was directed to attempt the accomplishment of these purposes. The undertaking was difficult: the French were employing every art which their versatile ingenuity could devise, to win the attachment of the Indians. The English governor, however, made overtures to the chiefs of the Six Nations; and, by the promise of valuable presents, prevailed on them to open a negotiation. A congress was accordingly appointed at Albany, whither the governor, accompanied by commissioners from the other colonies, repaired. By the few Indians who attended, the proposals of the English were received with evident coldness. They, however, accepted the presents, professed attachment to England, and declared their enmity to France. They even renewed their treaties with Britain, and demanded assistance to drive the French from the Indian territories. To avail themselves of these professions, the British governors sent major Washington, with four hundred Virginians, to occupy a post on the banks of the Ohio. That officer erected a fort to defend himself, until an expected reinforcement should arrive from New York. De Villier, a French commander, marched with nine hundred men to dislodge Washington; but first summoned the Virginians to evacuate a fort, which was built, as he asserted, on ground belonging to the French, or their allies. Finding his intimation disregarded, he attacked the place. Washington, though inferior in force, for some time defended himself with great vigour; but was at length obliged to yield to superior numbers. He surrendered the fort by capitulation, stipulating the return of his troops to their own country. The Indians, notwithstanding their recent professions and contract, attacked and plundered Washington's party, and massacred a considerable number.

Affairs were now drawing to a crisis between England and France. The French were persevering in a system of encroachment, which the British were determined no longer to permit. It now therefore remained for France, either to relinquish her usurpations, and make satisfaction to the injured, or to support injustice by force. As she appeared evidently resolved to

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1.

1754.

embrace the latter alternative, both nations considered a rupture as probable, and began to prepare for hostilities. France sent reinforcements of troops to America, and England directed her colonies to take proper measures to prevent or repel the inroads of the enemy.

IN the internal state of British America there were circumstances favourable to the progress of the aggressors. Each settlement had separate interests, and was internally divided into different factions. Some unseasonable disputes between the executive government and popular speakers in the assemblies, occupied the time and attention which the mutual interest of all parties required to have been devoted to the common defence.

WHEN the British parliament met in 1754-5, his majesty's speech,^b without expressly mentioning the probable approach of hostilities, evidently implied a conviction that they were sufficiently probable to call for vigorous precautionary measures. The king declared, that his principal view was, and should be, to strengthen the foundation and secure the continuance of a general peace; to improve the present advantages of tranquillity for promoting the trade of his subjects, and protecting those possessions which constituted one great source of their wealth and commerce. In voting the supplies, parliament made provision for more than the peace establishment of land and sea forces. Meanwhile preparations were making at Brest, and other ports of France. A powerful armament was equipping, and acknowledged to be intended for North America, though the French government continued to make amicable professions.

1755.
Message
from his
majesty to
parlia-
ment.

ON the 25th of March a message from his majesty informed parliament, that the present situation of affairs rendered it necessary to augment his forces by sea and land; and take such other measures as might best tend to secure the just rights and possessions of his crown in America, as well as to repel any attempts that should be formed against his majesty and his kingdoms. A loyal and suitable address was returned to this message, and a supply voted for the purpose recommended. The French

^b See State papers for that year.

still offered the most solemn assurances of intended amity, and adherence to treaties. With such artifice and duplicity did the court of Versailles conduct itself, that even the instrument of these professions, the ambassador at the court of London believed his employers to be sincere;ⁱ and, on discovering his error, repaired to his own country, and upbraided the French ministers with making him the tool of their dissimulation.

PERSEVERING in deceit, the court of Versailles ordered him to return to London, and give fresh assurances of its peaceful intentions. Undoubted intelligence now arriving that a strong armament was ready to sail from Rochfort and Brest, afforded proofs of the little confidence due to the French professions of pacific intentions. The court of London in vain applied to France for redress, and finding her fleet destined for the scene of her continued aggression, naturally and justly concluded her intentions to be hostile, and sent a squadron under admiral Boscawen to watch the motions of the enemy's fleet. Having sailed toward the end of April for the American seas, to intercept the armament, he reached in June the coast of Newfoundland. The French squadron arrived about the same time at the mouth of the river St. Lawrence. The fogs so prevalent on those coasts, prevented the fleets from seeing each other. A great part of our rival's armament escaped up the river; but the Alcide and Lys, two ships of the line, with land forces on board, being separated from the rest of the fleet, fell in with two British ships,^k and after a vigorous engagement were captured.

Preparations for war.

THIS was the commencement of maritime hostilities; and, were we to overlook preceding acts of the French, it might appear to be an aggression on our part; but the fact, as we have seen, was, that they had for several years encroached on our American territories: we had repeatedly applied for redress, but in vain; for they continued and increased their invasions. Thus they had commenced hostilities, while we had only used force in our own defence, to weaken an armament which was destined to support and extend their acts of injustice. It is as evident

Commencement of naval hostilities.

ⁱ See Smollett, vol. iii. p. 15. and the Defiance, capt. Andrew.

^k The Dunkirk, capt. (late earl) Howe,

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France the aggressor.

Seizure of the French merchant-men.

Campaign in America.

a principle as any in jurisprudence, that injuries attempted may be prevented; and therefore, that war to hinder an attack, is as lawful as war to repel or punish an injury. The French, however, had done more than attempt, they had inflicted injury, and were continuing in the same course; satisfaction having been demanded, they gave no redress; therefore force on our part was not only justifiable, but necessary. Hostilities being on the side of England just, the conduct of France from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, especially her schemes of naval aggrandizement, and the vast increase of her marine, rendered it expedient that we should endeavour chiefly to weaken that part of her power by which we might be most annoyed. Policy coincided with justice in dictating an attack upon her ships; this was really no more than making reprisals at sea, for her aggressions on land. As the provocation of the French justified reprisals, prudence required that, in order to weaken the enemy as well as indemnify ourselves, they should be as extensive as possible. The court of London formed a very vigorous and bold resolution: it issued orders, that all French ships, whether outward or homeward bound, should be seized and brought into English harbours. To execute this plan, admirals of the highest celebrity were chosen, and English cruisers were judiciously disposed in every station. Though our squadrons had not the good fortune to fall in with the enemy, our frigates and sloops were so successful in annoying the French trade, that before the end of the year, three hundred of their merchant ships, many of them from St. Domingo and Martinico, extremely rich, and eight thousand of their sailors, were taken. These captures not only deprived the French of a great source of revenue in the property which they contained, but of a great body of seamen, and thus were extremely advantageous to this country. They also afforded a lesson to a power seeking commercial and naval aggrandizement, that no policy could more effectually obstruct such an object, than a hostile attack on Great Britain.

THE English and their colonies began regular hostilities in America, to repel the invasions of the French, dispossess them of their unjust acquisitions. In the

plan of operations for the campaign 1755 in North America, it was proposed to attack the enemy on the confines of Nova Scotia in the north, their forts on the lakes in the west, and on the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia in the southwest. Early in the spring, a body of troops was transported from New England to Nova Scotia, to assist in driving the French from their encroachments on that province. Colonel Monckton was appointed by the governor to command in this service. Three frigates and a sloop were sent up the bay of Fundy, under the command of captain Rous, to second the land forces. The British and provincial troops, attacking a large body of regulars, Acadians, and Indians, compelled them to fly. Thence Monckton advanced to the fort of Beau-sejour, which the French had built on British ground. Investing it on the 12th of June, he in four days forced it to surrender. Changing the name to Cumberland, he secured the possession by a garrison. On the 17th, he reduced another fort; a valuable acquisition, as it was the chief magazine of the enemy in that quarter. Captain Rous, no less successful, obliged the French to evacuate a fort which they had erected at the mouth of the river St. John. These successes secured to England the entire possession of Nova Scotia, which had been so long disturbed by the enemy.

BUT the most important object of the campaign was, to drive the French from their posts on and near the Ohio. The strongest fort for securing their settlements was Du Quesne, against which an expedition was projected, to consist of British and provincial troops under general Braddock. This commander arrived in Virginia with two regiments in the month of February. When he was ready to take the field, he found that the contractors had provided, neither a sufficient quantity of provisions for his troops, nor the requisite number of carriages. This deficiency, however, might have been foreseen, if proper inquiries had been made into the state of that plantation. The Virginians, attending little to any produce but tobacco, did not raise corn enough for their own subsistence; and, being most commodiously situated, for water carriage, they had very few vehicles of any other kind. Pennsylvania, on

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1755.

General
Braddock.

the other hand, abounded in corn, in carts, wagons, and horses; that, therefore, would have been the fitter colony for forwarding military operations. Besides it would have afforded a shorter route, by equally practicable roads, to the destined place. The choice of Virginia considerably delayed the expedition. From Pennsylvania the commander was at length supplied, and enabled to march; but a fatal obstacle to success still remained in the character of the general. Braddock, bred in the English guards, was well versed in established evolutions. Of narrow understanding, though sufficiently expert in customary details, he had never ascended to the principles of military science. Rigid in matters of discipline, but fully as often for the display of command as the performance of duty, he was very unpopular among the soldiers. Positive and self-conceited in opinion, haughty and repulsive in manners, he closed the avenues to information. Brave and intrepid, he, with his confined abilities, might have been fit for a subordinate station, but evidently had not the power, essential to a general, of commanding an ascendancy over the minds of men. The creature of custom and authority, he despised all kinds of tactics and warfare which he had not seen practised. He did not consider, that the same species of contest may not suit the plains of Flanders and the fastnesses of America. The duke of Cumberland had written his instructions with his own hand, and had both in word and writing cautioned him strongly against ambuscade. The self-conceit of his contracted mind suffered him neither to regard these counsels, nor to consult any under his command respecting American warfare. The Indians, if well disposed, would, from their knowledge of the country and their countrymen, have rendered essential service. Disgusted, however, by his overbearing behaviour, most of them forsook his army. On the 18th of June he set off from fort Cumberland, and marched with great expedition through the woods; but, though entreated by his officers, neglected to explore the country. On the 8th of July he arrived within ten miles of fort Du Quesne, still utterly regardless of the situation or disposition of the enemy. The following day, about noon, as he was passing a swamp between a lane of trees,

he was suddenly attacked on both flanks by bodies of French and Indians concealed in the wood. The general, in his dispositions for resistance, showed the perseverance of his obstinacy. He was advised to scour the thickets with grapeshot, or with Indians and other light troops; but he commanded his forces to form in regular order, as if they had been advancing against an enemy in an open country. His soldiers, perceiving themselves misled into an ambuscade, were seized with a panic, and thrown into confusion; which was soon increased by the fall of most of their officers, at whom the dexterous Indian marksmen had chiefly aimed. The general fought valiantly; but receiving a shot, was carried off the field, and expired in a few hours: an awful instance, how little mere courage and forms of tactics, without judgment and prudence, can avail a commander in chief when he is employed on an important service. The provincial troops advancing from the rear, and engaging the enemy, gave the regulars time to recover their spirits and ranks, and thus preserved them from total destruction. Notwithstanding this support, more than half the troops were cut to pieces. The remains of the army made a masterly retreat to Virginia under colonel Washington, to whose skill and conduct it was chiefly owing that they were not overtaken and destroyed; but they thus necessarily left the western frontier exposed to the French and Indians.

THE same general object was attempted from the more northern provinces: thence it was proposed to dispossess the French of the cordon of forts erected between and along the lakes. General Shirley, who had succeeded Braddock, ordered the surviving troops to march from Virginia to New York, that they might join the northern forces. An expedition was accordingly undertaken against two of the principal forts; one at Niagara, between lakes Erie and Ontario, and the other at Crown Point, near lake Champlain. General William Johnson, who, having long resided in the interior parts of the province of New York, had learned the language and gained the affections of the Indians, was appointed to command against Crown Point. On the 18th of August the general began his march, and was by the Indians

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on the
lakes.

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exactly informed of the disposition of the enemy. He found baron Dieskau proceeding against him with a strong body of troops. An advanced party of British provincials and friendly Indians, being attacked by the French, suffered considerably before the rest of the army arrived; but Johnson, having come up with the main body, engaged and completely defeated the French forces, of whom almost one thousand were killed.

AUTUMN being now far advanced, it was considered as too late in the season to attack Crown Point, and the troops retired to quarters.

SHIRLEY himself headed the expedition to Niagara; but the defeat of Braddock had damped the spirits of the provincials, and even of the British troops, so that not a few deserted. It was the middle of August before he could collect a force sufficient for his purpose; and he was obliged to leave a number of his men to guard the fort of Oswego, on the western confines of New York, lest the French should seize it, and intercept his return. There also he was obliged to wait for provisions till the 29th of September. The autumnal rains being now set in, many of the Indians deserted the army. It was determined in a council of war, that under all these disadvantages they should defer the projected expedition till the following season. Shirley, therefore, leaving a garrison of 700 men at Oswego, returned to Albany.

THUS, in the campaign 1755, the general object was, to dislodge the French from their usurped possessions in America. This purpose was attempted on the side of Nova Scotia with success; against the French chain of forts with partial advantage, but without ultimate or material effect; and against their encroachments on the confines of Virginia, not only without success, but with grievous disaster: and, on the whole, this campaign of America was unfortunate to Britain. Our losses on that quarter of the world, however, were amply compensated by the decisive blow which was struck in Europe, against the trade and shipping of the enemy.

MEANWHILE, the contending parties were actively employed in interesting neighbouring princes in their respective causes. France, in conformity to her general

Negotia-
tion.

plan of naval aggrandizement, bent her most strenuous efforts to inspire Spain with a jealousy of the English, and to render her inimical to this country; but Spain was at this time peculiarly well affected to Britain. Ferdinand VI. was chiefly desirous of cultivating the arts of peace; of rousing his people from the lethargic indolence under which they had so long laboured; of propagating a spirit of industry, and encouraging manufactures and commerce. His ablest and most confidential adviser in these projected improvements, was Don Ricardo Wall, a gentleman of Irish extraction, respected for political ability, and from the conclusion of the peace, Spanish ambassador at the court of London. This minister bestowed great pains in learning the nature and processes of the manufactures and merchandise which had so much aggrandized England; and communicating his various observations to his master, convinced the monarch that, commercially and politically, an amicable intercourse with Britain was, and would be, most conducive to the best interests of Spain. These were sentiments which the catholic king continued to cherish; and when hostilities broke out, the French ministers professed to Ferdinand a desire of an accommodation, but insisted that a suspension of arms in America should be a preliminary. The Spanish king appeared not averse to the office of mediator; but the British minister stated, that, however willing his majesty might be to accept of Spain as an umpire, he could not agree to the proposed preliminary, without hazarding the whole British interests in America. Wall, thoroughly acquainted with the real state of affairs between the two powers, seconded these arguments, and Spain resolved to observe a strict impartiality in the contest.

Friendly disposition of Spain.

WITH other powers the negotiations of France were more successful. Overtures were made to German princes for succours, which implied an intention of attacking the electoral dominions of the king of England. Hanover had evidently no concern in the disputes between the belligerent powers, and was, respecting France, in a state of absolute neutrality. The design of invading that country was obviously unjust, and contrary to the law of nations. The French, however, knowing the predilection of

CHAP. I. George for his native dominions, thought that, to protect them, he would make great sacrifices of the British claims in America. Aware of their designs, his Britannic majesty concluded a treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, for the employment of eight thousand troops in the service of the king whenever they might be wanted. An alliance was also concluded with Elizabeth empress of Russia, by which she was to hold fifty-five thousand men in readiness for the service of his Britannic majesty.

1755
Subsidiary
treaties,

1756.
discussed
in parlia-
ment.

Mr. Pitt.

WHEN these treaties came before parliament, they underwent a very able discussion. The parties in parliament were at this time three: the first consisted of the Newcastle interest; the second was headed by Mr. Fox, with powerful connexions, which were formed and combined by the solid and masculine ability of that statesman; and the third was led by Mr. Pitt, who rested for support on superior genius, splendid eloquence, a bold and intrepid spirit, and the exalted character and extensive popularity which these qualities commanded. Ever since the final downfall of the pretender's hopes, and the discomfiture of the jacobites, the chief offices of government had been bestowed less exclusively upon whigs, than during the first thirty years of the house of Brunswick. Since the death of Mr. Pelham, Mr. Fox had been secretary of state, Mr. Pitt paymaster general of the forces, and Mr. Legge, Mr. Pitt's friend, chancellor of the exchequer; so that the whig connexion, though the duke of Newcastle was prime minister, did not monopolize administration, and the other servants of his majesty did not always coincide in his grace's political measures. The treaty with Russia was very severely censured by Pitt and Legge, as producing an enormous expense, from which Britain could derive no benefit, since the efforts of Russia could not be employed against the French in North America, where only they were invading our rights and possessions.^k The Newcastle party, however, argued, that this danger of Hanover was incurred from her connexion with Britain, without any act of her own; and that it was therefore

^k There is a very animated description of this debate in a letter from lord Orford. See Horace Walpole to general Conway, dated November 15, 1755. Orford's Works.

equitable and just that Britain should contribute towards her defence. On this ground, the treaty was approved by a great majority, and Legge and Pitt resigned their offices. Vigorous preparations were now making for war. In France, several bodies of troops moved towards the northern coasts, and excited in England an alarm of an intended invasion. Ere long it appeared, that the sole design of France was to divert our attention, while she meditated a blow in another quarter.

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THE French had prepared an armament in the Mediterranean: at Toulon, twelve ships of the line were ready in April 1756, and conveyed an army of eleven thousand men to Minorca. Landing there, they invested fort St. Philip on the 25th of April. The ministers and consuls of England, residing in Spain and Italy, had repeatedly sent intelligence to government of the armament preparing, and that they apprehended Minorca to be its object. In this opinion they were confirmed, by certain information that the fleet was victualled with only two months provision, and consequently could not be designed for America, or any distant expedition. General Blakeney, governor of Minorca, under the same conviction, repeatedly represented to the British ministers, the weakness of the garrison of St. Philip, which was the chief fortress of the island. No steps, however, were taken to reinforce the general, until the French were about to invade Minorca. Convinced at length of the danger, ministry attempted measures of defence; which were neither effectual in force, nor as it afterwards appeared, in the commander who was intrusted. The French fleet now consisted of fifteen ships of the line, well equipped and manned. Ten only were despatched from Britain, and under the conduct of admiral Byng, who had never acquired a character sufficient to justify so important a trust. On the 7th of April they sailed from Spithead for Gibraltar. The admiral, being instructed to inquire whether the French fleet had passed the Streights, learned at Gibraltar that the enemy had actually descended upon Minorca. He wrote to the admiralty, that if he had been sent in time, he could have prevented the French from effecting a landing. He complained that there were no magazines in Gibraltar for supplying his squadron with

Expedition
of France
against Mi-
norca.

Byng sent
to its relief.

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necessaries; that the careening wharfs, pits, and store houses, were entirely decayed, so that he would have the greatest difficulty in repairing his ships; that it would be impolitic to attempt the relief of St. Philip, as it could not be saved but by a land force strong enough to raise the siege; and that a small reinforcement would only increase the number of men who must fall into the hands of the enemy. This letter, implying a charge of culpable negligence against administration, and also anticipating the miscarriage of his enterprise, was very displeasing at home, and rendered Byng odious to government.

declines an
engage-
ment with
the French
fleet.

THE admiral, reinforced by a squadron under Mr. Edgecumbe, left Gibraltar on the 8th of May.¹ Arriving off Minorca, he attempted to send intelligence to general Blakeney. The French fleet now appearing, he formed his line of battle. In the evening the enemy advanced in order, but tacked about to gain the weather gage. The next morning both advanced to the conflict. Rear-admiral West, second in command, attacked the enemy with such force as soon to drive them out of their line; but he was not supported by admiral Byng's division. The admiral, though his own ship had 90 guns, and was well manned and equipped, kept aloof. His captain exhorted him to bear down upon the enemy; but he declared his resolution to avoid the error of admiral Matthews, who, in the preceding war, by pushing too far forward, had broken the line, and exposed himself to the enemy's fire. Such precipitation Byng was determined to avoid; and, indeed, so resolutely did he adhere to his cautious plan, that he really did not engage. The French admiral, not wishing to compel a closer fight, took advantage of Mr. Byng's avoidance of rashness, and retreated. Calling a council of war, Byng stated his own inferiority to the enemy in weight of metal and number of men; with his opinion, that the relief of Minorca was impracticable, and that it was safest to retire to Gibraltar. The council having concurred in these sentiments, he accordingly did retreat to Gibraltar; and Minorca thus deserted, after a very gallant defence of nine weeks by general Blakeney and his

¹ See Smollett, vol. iii. p. 280.

valiant band, fell into the hands of the enemy. The admiralty, informed of this conduct, was extremely enraged against Byng. How, they asked, could he ascertain the impracticability of defending Minorca, without trying the experiment? Was the impression made by West, a proof of the inferiority of our naval force? Had not the English generally prospered from adventurous boldness? Where was the danger of seconding, instead of abandoning, the other division, when it had broken the enemy's line? Was it by such avoidance of contest, that England had attained the highest pitch of naval glory? These sentiments extended from the admiralty over the whole nation. A violent popular rage arose against Byng. This predominant passion, said by the historians of the time^m to have been cherished by ministers, in order to divert the public attention from their own supineness, naturally overlooked the circumstances of the case. Presuming him guilty, without ascertaining the grounds of the alleged guilt, the nation, by anticipating, perhaps in a certain degree produced, the sentence which he afterwards underwent. Byng, having been superseded, was brought home under arrest, and committed close prisoner to Greenwich hospital. He was ^{Byng tried,} tried for cowardice, treachery, and not having done his utmost. Acquitted of the two first charges, he was condemned on the last. Great intercessions were made in his favour, and even by the court which sentenced him, to procure the royal mercy. The applications, however, were unsuccessful; though respited for a time, he was shot on ^{and executed.} the 14th of April 1757. Many, who did not pretend to vindicate Byng from the charge of misconduct, considered his fall as a sacrifice to the numerous, but now feeble junto, which supported the measures of the duke of Newcastle. Indeed it is evident, that, whether Byng's conduct, (if he had a sufficient force) arose from timidity, professional ignorance, or gross error of judgment, it was such as demonstrated him unfit for the office with which he was intrusted, and consequently was disgraceful to those ministers who had selected him for that employment. As he never had established a high character as a naval com-

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mander, and there were other officers who had attained eminent distinction, it was alleged that the choice of Byng arose from political connexion, and not from personal character. His trial and execution, however, if they for a time diverted the public attention, did not continue to abstract it from the conduct of administration.

Declara-
tion of war.

NEGOTIATIONS had still been going on between the courts of London and Versailles; but the king of England, from the invasion of Minorca, considering France as determined to reject all amicable overtures, declared war in May 1756, and published a manifesto stating the ground both of its justice and necessity. In the following month, war was declared by France against Britain.

Campaign
in Ame-
rica.

THE transactions in America in the campaign 1756, were neither advantageous nor honourable to England. The British plan was, to attack the fort of Niagara, in order to cut off the communication between Canada and Ontario; to reduce Ticonderago and Crown Point, that the frontiers of New York might be delivered from the danger of invasion, and Great Britain might become master of lake Champlain; to detach a body of troops, by the river Kennebec, to alarm the capital of Canada; and to besiege fort Du Quesne and other fortresses on the Ohio.^a The preparations, however, were by no means adequate to such numerous and extensive objects. There was great tardiness in despatching troops from England. The earl of Loudon, appointed commander in chief, arrived so late with his armament, that it was useless for the whole year. Thus the enemy were enabled, not only to be better provided against future attacks, but even then to act on the offensive. The French and Indians continued to molest the British settlements with impunity. Encouraged by the inactivity of the English forces, they attacked the fortress of Oswego, and made themselves masters of it, though strongly garrisoned. The earl of Loudon, finding himself unable to act offensively that year, employed his time in preparations for beginning the following campaign early, and with great force. No action of importance distinguished the naval history of this year. Single British

^a See Smollett. vol. iii. p. 298.

ships took merchantmen and ships of war belonging to the enemy, but the fleets were not engaged after our retreat from Minorca. The most important acquisitions to this country were attained through privateers, which considerably distressed the enemy's trade.

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Affairs on the continent.

IN the hostilities between Britain and France, other countries now became involved. His Britannic majesty had, as we have seen, formed a treaty with Russia, in order to preserve the neutrality of Hanover, and to employ a great portion of the French forces. Circumstances, however, speedily gave a total change to this system of alliance, and effected a confederacy between the king of Britain and the Prussian Frederic, who was the opponent of Russia. These engagements, and their objects, necessarily demand a short review of the progress and state of the Prussian power under that extraordinary man, who then held the sovereignty.

IN the seventeenth century, Brandenburg was a principality of little importance in the politics of Europe. Towards its close, its sovereign became an elector; and in the beginning of the last century, a king. Frederic William, the second monarch of Prussia, with a view to increase the power and importance of his kingdom, devoted his attention almost exclusively to his army. He established a military force, much superior to any that had been on foot under his predecessors; and formed an army, with the most perfect discipline, according to the existing rules of tactics, but far inferior in number and strength to the forces of the neighbouring potentates. Indeed, his dominions could not supply, much less maintain, a very powerful army. His soil was unfruitful, his population was scanty, his people were poor, and his revenue was inconsiderable. These were the narrow resources which, on the death of Frederic William, fell into the hands of his son and successor^o Frederic II. But Frederic had in his genius and spirit resources which supplied the political and physical wants of his kingdom: he was a man born to render a small state great.

Frederic II. of Prussia.

THE house of Brandenburg had ancient claims to the two principalities of Silesia, almost as great in extent,

^o See Gillies's Frederic, p. 62.

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and fully equal in value, to half its dominions. The claim was itself intricate. Austria asserted with truth, that Brandenburg had yielded Silesia for an equivalent; but Frederic denied that his predecessor possessed the power of ceding that territory; alleging besides, that no equivalent had been received; and that the consideration given, was totally inadequate. As Austria altogether reprobated this construction of the treaty, Frederic had, on the death of the emperor Charles VI., invaded Silesia; the queen of Hungary, who was then engaged with so many enemies, and unable to defend Silesia effectually, had ceded it at last, by the treaty of Breslaw, to the Prussian king. Hostilities being again renewed between Maria Teresa and Frederic, a second peace was concluded at Dresden in 1745, in which the king of Prussia dictated the terms, and Silesia was renounced more solemnly than before. The empress queen,^p considering the valuable province of Silesia as not restored by her justice, but extorted from her weakness, had scarcely settled this peace, before she began to project schemes for its recovery. In 1746, she formed with the court of Petersburg a treaty which was ostensibly defensive, but really offensive. By a secret article it was provided, that if his Prussian majesty should attack the empress queen, the empress of Russia, or the republic of Poland, the aggression should be considered as a breach of the treaty of Dresden; the right of the empress queen to Silesia, ceded by that treaty, should revive; and the contracting parties should mutually furnish an army of sixty thousand men to reinvest the empress queen with that duchy. Poland, without actually signing this treaty, was understood to accede to its conditions.

Maria Te-
resa of
Austria.

AFTER the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the empress queen had devoted great attention to the internal improvement of her country, especially to the increase of her military strength. This engine of power she promoted by a judicious choice of officers, liberal encouragement to her troops, and, above all, by her rare and happy talents of exciting in those who approached her person, zeal,

^p Francis Stephen, her husband, had been then just chosen emperor.

emulation, exertion, and a resolution to encounter every risk in order to obtain her favour.⁹ She rendered her army much more perfect and formidable than any force had before been under the house of Austria: and while thus making preparations at home, she was not idle abroad, she employed her utmost efforts to embroil the king of Prussia with the court of Petersburg, and made rapid though secret progress in her undertaking. The politics of Maria Teresa were at this time chiefly directed by count Kaunitz, who for so many years served the house of Austria with distinguished zeal and ability. Kaunitz, anxious to gratify his mistress by the recovery of Silesia, was aware that the loss of that province, and the aggrandizement of Frederic, had been materially promoted by the war between Austria and France. While the courts of Versailles and Berlin continued connected, it would be very difficult for the empress queen to execute her designs of humbling Frederic and exalting herself. Investigating the history and interests of Austria, Kaunitz saw that her dissensions with France, her most powerful neighbour, had been the greatest obstacle to the gratification of her ambition. He knew also, that the house of Austria had been the chief obstacle on the continent to the aggrandizement of France. The French and Austrian sovereigns had been rivals from the time of Francis I. and Charles V. Kaunitz projected a sacrifice of ancient rivalry to present interest, by effecting an alliance with France. Having impressed on the empress queen the justness and force of his views, he was sent as ambassador to the court of Versailles. Qualified by the depth of his genius for conducting any great or difficult business, he was by other qualities as well as his ministerial talents peculiarly well fitted to acquire ascendancy at the court of France. Versatile, capable of accommodatiag himself to any characters or humours which it suited his purpose to conciliate, he greatly resembled a French courtier. In his taste and manners as trifling, as he was in his understanding and political views profound, he could match a Frenchman in either his frivolity or strength. Having

⁹ Gillies's Frederic, p. 207.

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established his influence at Versailles, he employed it in promoting his grand project of confederacy. He represented to the French ministers, "that the time was now come, when the French ought to emancipate themselves from the influence of the kings of Prussia and Sardinia, and a number of petty princes, who studiously sowed dissension between the great powers of Europe, in order to benefit themselves. Excited by their artifices, the courts of Versailles and Vienna were continually contriving schemes hostile to each other, and hurtful to both; whereas, in conformity to the rules of just policy, they ought rather to adopt such a system of public conduct, as would remove every ground of difference or jealousy, and lay the foundation for a solid and permanent peace." The novelty of this plan of politics at first appeared extravagant to the court of France, which had been long accustomed to consider the houses of Austria and Bourbon as rivals; but, on maturely weighing the propositions, they became more disposed for their reception. Besides the many continental advantages which Kaunitz from time to time stated as about to accrue from this plan, they would be able, by amity with Austria, to direct the principal part of their force against Britain.

Alliance
between
Britain and
Prussia :

MEANWHILE, France urged the king of Prussia to assist her in invading the electorate of Hanover. King George applied to the empress queen to send to the Low Countries a certain number of men stipulated by treaty, which she declared it was impossible for her to spare for that purpose, as she was apprehensive of the designs of the king of Prussia. Alarmed for the safety of his electorate, our king proposed to Prussia a treaty for preserving the tranquillity of Germany. Frederic thought this proposition more advisable than a renewal of the alliance with France which was then on the eve of expiration. A treaty was accordingly concluded between Britain and Prussia on the 16th of January, 1756, by which the contracting parties bound themselves not to suffer foreign troops of any nation to enter or pass through

Germany, but to secure the empire from the calamities of war, and to maintain its fundamental laws and constitutions. The court of France appeared to believe that the king of Prussia was a subordinate prince who was bound to execute the mandates of Versailles. Informed of Frederic's treaty with England, the French courtiers and ministers were so arrogant and insolent, as to charge him with defection from his ancient protector.*

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KAUNITZ saw that this was the time for obtaining the desired alliance with France, and accordingly the treaty was concluded on the 9th of May 1756. This famous confederacy, announced as the union of the great powers, contained a mutual promise between the contracting parties, of reciprocally assisting each other with twenty-four thousand men, in case either of them should be attacked. The czarina, being applied to by the now allied powers, readily acceded to a confederation calculated to promote the projects formed between her and Maria Teresa in 1746. As the depression of the power of England was the object which France sought by her encroachments in North America, and the cause of the war between these two nations, so the depression of Prussia was the object that Austria sought through her alliances with the other great empires, which involved in war the whole continent of Europe. The elector of Saxony, (king of Poland,) though he professed neutrality, really joined in the designs against Prussia. Frederic, one part of whose policy it was to keep in pay spies at every court whose designs it imported him to know, was accurately informed, not only of the objects, but the plans of the allied potentates, and made vigorous preparations for defending himself and his kingdom.

between
France
and Aus-
tria.

MARIA TERESA collected magazines, and assembled two armies in Bohemia and Moravia. The king of Poland, under pretence of exercising his soldiers, drew together sixteen thousand men, and occupied the strong post of Pirna in Saxony. The Russians formed a camp of fifty thousand men in Livonia. Perceiving these hostile preparations, Frederic demanded categorically of the

* King of Prussia's History of the Seven Years War.

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empress queen, whether she meant to keep or to violate the peace. If she meant the former, nothing would satisfy him, but a clear, formal, and positive assurance, that she had no intention of attacking him either this year or the next. He declared that he should deem an ambiguous answer a denunciation of war, and attested heaven that the empress alone would, in that event, be responsible for the blood spilt and all the dismal consequences. To this demand, requiring so short and direct an answer, a long, indirect, and evasive reply was returned by Kaunitz. The evident intention was, to compel Frederic to commence hostilities.^a Seeing war unavoidable, the Prussian hero resolved to strike the first blow; but, before he proceeded, intimated to Maria Teresa, that he considered Kaunitz's answer as a declaration of war.

Frederic
invades
Saxony.

To cover Brandenburg, and carry the war into Bohemia, it was necessary to secure the command of Saxony; because, unless he became master of that electorate, its sovereign might intercept the free navigation of the Elbe, cut off his intercourse with his own dominions, and discomfit his expedition. Frederic, accordingly, in August, entered upper Saxony, and took possession of Dresden the capital. He had already, through his spies, procured copies of the negotiations between the king of Poland and the two Imperial powers; but, wishing to manifest their designs to the world, and aware that they would declare the alleged papers to be forgeries, he was particularly anxious to find the originals. For that purpose, he carefully ransacked the Saxon archives, and at length found the desired documents.^v Having thus procured the most authentic evidence of the intended partition of his dominions, Frederic published them to the world, to expose the designs of his enemies, and justify his own conduct. The Saxon army being so strongly posted at Pirna that Frederic saw it would be impossible to force their lines, he

^a See Gillies's *Frederic*, p. 216.

^v It was here that Frederic found the secret articles of the treaty of Petersburg, which I have already mentioned as concluded between Austria and Russia against Prussia, soon after the peace of Dresden; with a reference to a partition treaty made between the powers before that peace; which treaty of Petersburg was in effect acceded to by the king of Poland.

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Blocked them up with one division of his army, and with another marched against the Austrians, who were advancing to their relief under general Braun. He attacked them on the first of October, though greatly superior in number, at Lowositz on the left bank of the Elbe; and, completely defeating them, forced them to abandon all hopes of succouring the Saxons. Frederic, with his victorious troops, returned to the blockade of Pirna. The Saxons, being in great distress for want of provisions, and now deprived of all hopes of assistance, resolved to attempt their escape; but in making the experiment, being surrounded by the Prussians, and finding it impossible to force their way through the enemy, they were compelled to lay down their arms, and surrender themselves prisoners of war. Having thus defeated the intentions of the enemy for this campaign, and the season being far advanced, Frederic placed his troops in winter quarters.

IN Great Britain, the people were very much dissatisfied with the campaign 1756. The loss of Minorca, followed by the inactivity in America, excited general indignation. Addresses, praying a strict inquiry into the causes of our misfortunes, were presented to parliament from all parts of the kingdom. Ministers were loudly accused, as being, by their incapacity and disunion, the source of our disgraces and disasters. It was certain that great discord prevailed in the cabinet. Though the duke of Newcastle found it necessary to have the assistance of Mr. Fox's abilities, he by no means regarded him with confidence and favour. Mr. Fox, on the other hand, far from approving the particular measures, and farther still the general conduct of his colleagues, disdained to continue the tool of so feeble a junto, and resigned his employment. The public loudly called for sacrificing an inefficient combination to the highest individual genius, and for bringing Mr. Pitt, into office. The duke of Newcastle resigned. Mr. Pitt, in November 1756, was appointed principal secretary of state; Mr. Legge, chancellor of the exchequer; and the duke of Devonshire, first lord of the treasury.

Discon-
tents in
Britain.

Mr. Pitt
appointed
minister.

His majesty, desirous of making great efforts in Germany, in his speech to the house took notice of the Parlia-
ment.

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I.

1756.

unnatural union between France and Austria, which he considered as threatening the subversion of the empire, and the destruction of the protestant interest on the continent. He called on parliament to enable him to use effectual efforts against such pernicious designs. Soon after, Mr. Pitt delivered a message to the house, of which the substance was, "that, as the formidable preparations and vindictive designs of France were evidently bent against his majesty's electoral dominions, and the territories of his good ally the king of Prussia, his majesty confided in the zeal and affection of his faithful commons, to assist him in forming and maintaining an army of observation for the just and necessary defence of the same; and to enable him to fulfil his engagements with his Prussian majesty, for the security of the empire, and the support of their common interests." In the house of commons, when this message was discussed, strong objections were made to an interference in continental politics. It was asserted, that it was neither the duty nor interest of England, to exhaust its blood and treasure in defence of Hanover; and that Austria herself, notwithstanding her recent alliance with France, would not suffer that power to acquire a permanent footing in Germany. Mr. Pitt, viewing the course of French policy, showed that the main object of France had long been the depression of England. Perceiving distant as well as immediate consequences, he contended that continental acquisitions, by increasing her power and revenue, would ultimately render her more dangerous to this country. He had disapproved of various treaties and subsidies that had been formed and granted in the present reign on account of Hanover solely, and without any advantage to Great Britain; but the treaty with the king of Prussia had for its object the balance of power, now endangered by the confederacy between France and the two empresses. Adherence to it was absolutely necessary for the security of England. Hanover was endangered, on account of Britain; it was therefore just that from Britain she should receive protection. Besides by employing the forces of France in Europe, we weakened her exertions in America. Such was the reasoning by which Mr. Pitt supported the request of the message; it was received by

the majority of the house with great approbation, and suitable supplies were voted. CHAP. I

THOUGH parliament had shown itself eager for the vigorous prosecution of the war, and had in its votes made very liberal provisions for the year; yet there was still a want of harmony in his majesty's councils. The whig confederacy sought an exclusive direction in the administration of affairs. Mr. Pitt would not sacrifice his own opinions and measures to those of the party. The Newcastle combination was most agreeable to the king, and willing to go the greatest lengths in gratifying his electoral partialities. Mr. Pitt, in his principles and system of continental interference, considered the dignity and interest of the British crown and nation,^w and not the prepossessions of the elector of Hanover.^x He did not at that time conceive that so great a force was necessary to act in Germany, as the king and the Newcastle interest thought requisite. Being inflexible on this subject, he and his friend and supporter Mr. Legge, were dismissed from their offices. During several months there was no regular administration. A coalition was proposed between Mr. Fox and the Newcastle party; but in the present state of public opinion it would be evidently ineffectual. The Newcastle adherents saw, that they could now only possess a share of the government, by suffering the chief direction of affairs to be vested in superior ability. Numberless addresses were presented to his majesty, beseeching him to reinstate Mr. Pitt. Party spirit appeared extinguished; all voices, without one dissonant murmur, were united in his praise. Mr. Fox, in this state of circumstances, knowing it would be vain for him to contend with the general voice of the people, which was eagerly and loudly soliciting the sovereign to place Pitt at the head of his councils, with much prudence and judgment advised the king to comply with the public desire. Mr. Pitt

1757.
Disensions
in the cab-
inet.

Mr. Pitt
dismissed:

^w Smollett, vol. iii. p. 382.

^x This is a difference very evident between the continental engagements advised by Mr. Pitt, and many of those encouraged, or at least agreed to, by former ministers, both of George II. and his father. The earl of Sunderland, sir Robert Walpole, earl Granville, and the duke of Newcastle, concluded treaties, the exclusive objects of which were, German politics, and the security of Hanover. Mr. Pitt's policy, though it embraced Hanover in its compass, yet had for its object the humiliation of France, and the prosperity of England.

CHAP. I. was again made principal secretary of state, and now became prime minister of England. This appointment of a chief minister, is an epoch in the history of the Brunswick administration of Britain. From the accession of the house of Hanover, the highest offices of state had been uniformly held by members of the whig party. Mr. Pitt, a friend to the constitution of his country, and favourable to the genuine principles of original whigs, was not a member of any confederacy, and owed his promotion to himself only. He commanded party. His elevation manifested the power which the people never fail to possess in a free and well constituted government. Personally disagreeable to the king, unsupported by any aristocratical confederacy, he was called by the unanimous voice of the people, in a situation of great danger and difficulty, to be the chief manager of British affairs. His appointment was also an epoch in the history of the war; as from the time that he was firmly established in office, and his plans were put into execution, instead of disaster and disgrace, success and glory followed the British arms.

1757.
is again appointed.

Campaign
in America.

IN the campaign 1757, however, the wisdom and energy of Mr. Pitt were employed too late to operate effectually. This summer, the earl of Loudon, instead of attacking Crown Point, as had been expected, undertook an expedition to cape Breton against Louisburg. Admiral Holbourne arrived at Halifax on the 9th of July, with a squadron of transports for conveying the troops, consisting of about twelve thousand men. Small vessels, which had been sent to examine the condition of the enemy before the armament sailed, brought the unwelcome intelligence, that ten thousand land forces, of which six thousand were regulars, were stationed at Louisburg; that seventeen ships of the line were moored in the harbour; and that the fortress was plentifully supplied with provisions and military stores. Informed of these particulars, lord Loudon resolved to postpone the expedition; so that in fact

Mr. Legge was restored to his office of chancellor of the exchequer; the duke of Newcastle was again made first lord of the treasury; lord Anson was placed at the head of the admiralty; sir Robert Henley was made keeper of the great seal, in the room of lord Hardwicke; and Mr. Fox was appointed to the subordinate, but lucrative office, of paymaster general of the army.

nothing was either effected, or even attempted, that year, by the army under his lordship's command.

CHAP.

1757.

WHILE Loudon was absent at Halifax, Montcalm the French commander in chief, extended the enemy's possessions in the back settlements, which it had been their principal object to increase. He attacked and captured fort William Henry on the southern shore of lake George; and by this accession to their former advantages, the French acquired the entire command of the extensive chain of lakes that connects the two great rivers St. Lawrence and Mississippi, and that forms a grand line both of communication and division between the northern and southern parts of this vast continent. Thus in 1757 the interests of Great Britain in North America continued to decline.

ADMIRAL HOLBOURN, with fifteen sail of the line, appeared off Louisburg; and, being reinforced with four more, attempted to draw the French to battle; but the enemy were too cautious to venture an engagement. The English fleet, after cruising in those seas till the middle of September, was overtaken by a storm, which wrecked one of the ships, and damaged the greater number; and they returned to England in a very shattered state.

THE king of Prussia, having wintered at Dresden, published a manifesto, setting forth the conduct and designs of the Imperial powers and of Saxony, and asserting that he himself had proceeded on principles of self-defence. Meanwhile the combined powers were making great preparations; and France by a subsidy prevailed on the Swedes to join in the confederacy. Maria Teresa exerted herself with great zeal and success; she persuaded the empress of Russia, that the invasion of Saxony, a country guaranteed by Elizabeth, was an insult to her dignity. Besides addressing the czarina's pride, she tempted her avarice by a subsidy of two millions of crowns, and added considerable bribes to her ministers. With the Germanic body her exertions and success were similar; and it was proposed, that the electors of Brandenburg and Hanover should be put to the ban of the empire. The king of Prussia in these circumstances had recourse to his only powerful ally George II., and pro-

Affairs of
Germany.

CHAP.

I.

1757.

Operations
of the duke
of Cum-
berland.

posed a plan of cooperation more extensive than the British sovereign deemed necessary. George confined his plan to the defence of the eastern bank of the Weser, while Frederic wished that of the Rhine to be the principal station, as, from the depth and rapidity of the river, it was much more tenable than the Weser, which was fordable in many places. An army of Germans in British pay was formed on the plan of king George, and the command intrusted to the duke of Cumberland. In July 1757 his royal highness took the field on the eastern bank of the Weser. The French commanded by marshal d'Estrees, as Frederic had foreseen, easily passed that river, and proceeded to Munster. On the 25th of July they attacked the duke in his intrenchments at Hastenback, and seized one of his batteries. The hereditary prince of Brunswick,^a then only twenty-one years of age, regained the battery sword in hand; and, to use the words of a respectable historian, "proved, in the first exploit, that "nature had formed him for a hero."^a At the same time, a Hanoverian colonel, with a few battalions, penetrating through a wood, attacked the French in the rear, put them to flight, and took their cannon and colours. The main body of the enemy, however, being in possession of an eminence that commanded and flanked both the lines of the infantry and the battery of the allies, the duke of Cumberland thought it impossible to dislodge them from their posts; and commanded his forces to retire towards Hamalen. Marshal d'Estrees had formed so very different an opinion of the issue of the contest, that he was actually ordering a retreat himself, when he perceived, to his great astonishment, the allied army withdrawing.^b The duke having evacuated Hamalen, retreated to Nienbergh, then to Verden, and at last to Staden; and thus abandoned the whole country to the French, without any farther contest. The duke of Richlieu, successor to d'Estrees, pursued his highness, and reduced him to a distressing dilemma: before him was the ocean, on the right the Elbe, on the left the Weser, became deeper as it approached the sea; behind was the

^a Now duke of Brunswick.
^b Gillies's Frederic, p. 247.

^a See Gillies's Frederic, p. 247.

enemy. Nothing remained, but either to fight their way through the hostile force, which they considered as impossible, or to surrender themselves prisoners of war. Accordingly, the duke capitulated with his whole army, and concluded the noted convention of Cloister-seven, in September 1757. By this treaty the troops of Hesse and Brunswick were to return to their respective countries; the Hanoverians were to remain at Staden, in a district assigned them, and no mention was made of the electorate, which was occupied by the French. This unfortunate event was imputed to two errors; one in the original plan of the campaign, in choosing a weak line of defence on the Weser, instead of a strong line on the Rhine; another in the execution, by the order for retreat when there was a probable chance of victory. It was also said, that if the allied army, instead of retiring to a narrow angle, had proceeded towards Prussia, they might have been easily covered by the Prussian forces. His royal highness having returned to England, and not finding his conduct received with that approbation which he expected, resigned all his military employments. The kingdom being now under the administration of Pitt, in order to cause a diversion of the French force favourable to the allies in Germany, he planned an expedition to the coast of France; and a formidable armament was equipped with surprising despatch.^c The fleet was commanded by sir Edward Hawke, and the army by sir John Mordaunt.

CHAR.

b

1757.

Convention of Cloister-seven.

On the 23d of September, the fleet anchored off the river Charente, and took the Isle of Aix, with its garrison. It was proposed to attack Rochfort. Sir Edward Hawke was eager for this measure, but sir John Mordaunt deemed it too dangerous an attempt. After continuing in the river, and reconnoitring the coasts for many days, it was resolved in a council of war that they should return to England. The nation was disappointed, and enraged, at

Expedition to the coast of France.

^c The equipment affords an instance of the vigorous boldness and decision of the minister's character. When he ordered the fleet to be equipped, and appointed the time and place of its rendezvous, lord Anson said it would be impossible to have it prepared so soon. "It may (said Mr. Pitt) be done; and if the ships are not ready at the time specified, I shall signify your lordship's neglect to the king, and impeach you in the house of commons." This intimation produced the desired effect: the ships were ready. Belsham's George II. p. 428.

GHAP. I. the failure of this expedition. All were sensible that the minister had done every thing in his power, and were perfectly satisfied with the conduct of the admiral. The blame was thrown upon the general. He was tried by a court martial, and acquitted. His exculpatory sentence, however, did not alter the public opinion.

1757.

Plans and exploits of the king of Prussia.

DURING these disasters of his ally, the king of Prussia having to contend against five great powers, was in the most perilous circumstances, which only served to display the extraordinary vigour of his genius, the wisdom of his councils, and the magnanimity of his disposition. From his winter quarters at Prague, he in the beginning of April took the field. Pretending to design only a defensive war, he fortified his camp at Dresden, and made some feeble incursions into Bohemia. The Austrian general, conceiving him to intend nothing beyond these petty enterprises, was lulled into security. Frederic ordered his troops to assemble by different routes at Prague on the 5th of May, where general Brown was posted with a considerable force. The king, knowing that his enemies expected a great reinforcement, determined to bring them to battle before fresh troops should arrive. He attacked them without delay, forced their intrenchments, and gained a complete victory.^d The Austrians took refuge in Prague. Frederic summoned that city to surrender; but marshal Daun, hastening to its relief, encamped at Kolin upon the Elbe. The king of Prussia, on the 18th of June 1757, having attacked his intrenchments, was repulsed and defeated with great loss; and in consequence of this disaster, raised the siege of Prague. If marshal Daun had been as active in pursuing, as he was skilful in obtaining his victory, he might have prevented Frederic from retreating with the remains of his troops. From Prague, the king retired into Saxony. The Austrians recovered the whole country of Bohemia, and advanced in pursuit of Frederic. Meanwhile the Russians ravaged Prussia, and the Swedes entered Pomerania. To increase the multiplied dangers of the Prussian monarch, the convention of Cloister-seven had deprived him of his only ally;

Defeated at Prague by the Austrians.

Perilous situation,

stimulates his genius and courage.

^d Nineteen thousand were killed, and five thousand taken prisoners. The loss of the conquerors was also very considerable.

and the French forces were now at liberty to direct against him their whole efforts.* This hero was always more energetic and formidable than ever, after a defeat. Instead of yielding to difficulties, he was the more strongly incited to extraordinary exertions. With a small body of men he marched against the French, and the troops of the Circles, posted at Rosbach, near Leipsic, in Upper Saxony. He drew up his forces (November 5th, 1757) with such skill, that he overcame a great army. Ten thousand of the enemy were killed and wounded, and seven thousand taken prisoners. Having thus overcome the French, he marched with the utmost expedition against the Austrian army, now assembled in Silesia. The Prussians had lost almost all the towns of that country, and at last Breslaw itself, the capital. Frederic in the end of November arrived in Silesia with an army of thirty-three thousand men. He found the Austrians posted at Louthcr, being sixty thousand in number, under marshal Daun. By the mere force of military genius, he gained a complete and decisive victory, having killed or taken twenty-one thousand men.^f Frederic, who knew how to use as well as to gain a victory, retook Breslaw, and recovered Silesia. In the midst of such numerous and complicated operations, Frederic's genius exerted itself in policy as well as in arms. The Russians were so powerful in Prussia, that his troops contended against them in vain. Frederic, by his emissaries, entertained a secret correspondence with Peter the Great, duke and heir apparent to the throne of Russia, who was well affected towards the Prussian king. The chancellor Bestuchew, prime minister, in order to gratify Peter,

CHAP.

1757.

He gains a great victory at Rosbach, over the French.

Proceeds in quest of the Austrians,

and gains a decisive victory.

e At this time the king of Prussia thus expressed himself in a letter to his friend earl mareschal: "What say you of this league, which has only the mark of Brandenburg for its object? The great elector would be surprised to see his great grandson at war with the Russians, the Swedes, the Austrians, almost all Germany, and a hundred thousand French auxiliaries. I know not whether it will be disgrace in me to submit; but I am sure there will be no glory in vanquishing me."

f Dr. Gillies, who displays great military science in his account of the engagements of Frederic, shows, that in this battle he adopted both the disposition and movements of Epaminondas at the battle of Leuctra. He directed his main attack against one part (the left wing) of the enemy's troops, and by worsting them, threw the rest into confusion. One of his evolutions was by marshal Daun mistaken for a retreat; which secured the victory to the Prussians, as a similar misapprehension of the enemy had done to the Theban hero. Gillies's Frederic, p. 162.

CHAP.

I.

1757.

Glorious
result of
Frederic's
campaign.

likely soon to be his master, gave orders to the Russian troops to retire towards Poland. Marshal Lehwald, who had commanded against the Russians, freed from their formidable army, marched against the Swedes in Pomerania, defeated them, and drove them out of that province. Frederic, before he went into winter quarters, reduced Leibnitz, the only fort in Silesia, and so recovered from the Austrians the whole of that province, on account of which they had begun the war. Thus did this extraordinary man, deserted by every ally, with a comparatively small number of forces, make head against the most formidable combination recorded in the annals of Europe; defeat their several armies, distinguished for valour and discipline, and commanded by the most skilful generals; dispossess them of all their acquisitions; and, though fighting against almost the whole continental force of Europe, evince his superiority over all his enemies.

1758.
North
America.

Aber-
crombie
takes the
command.

Objects
and plan of
the cam-
paign.

Expedition
against
cape Bre-
ton.

successful.

THE principal object of British preparations, and the chief theatre of war, was North America. The earl of Loudon being recalled after the unsuccessful campaign of 1757, the chief command devolved on general Abercrombie. Next in authority was major general Amherst. Admiral Boscawen having arrived early in the year, the forces, including provincials as well as regulars, amounted to no less than fifty thousand men. The generals and admiral concerted the plan of the campaign; the objects of which were, the reduction of Louisburg, and the capture of the French line of forts. General Amherst, sailing with ten thousand men under convoy of Boscawen's fleet to cape Breton, anchored on the 2d of June in sight of Louisburg fortress, which a few days after was regularly invested. After standing a siege of seven weeks, it was compelled to surrender on the 27th of July. Besides the conquest of the whole island, six ships of the line and five frigates were either taken or destroyed by the English.

Attempt
on Ticon-
deroga.

GENERAL ABERCROMBIE himself, with the main body of the army, undertook the expedition against the forts. His first attempt was against Ticonderoga, a fort situated between lakes George and Champlain, surrounded on three sides with water, and in front secured by a morass. It

was defended by a breastwork and intrenchment, and garrisoned by five thousand men.⁵ The badness of the roads had prevented the artillery from keeping pace with the army, and it was not yet arrived. Notwithstanding this material want, the general determined to attack the fort; but, though the troops behaved with great gallantry, they were repulsed with considerable loss; two thousand being killed or taken prisoners, and the number of the latter was comparatively few. The general made a hasty retreat to a camp on the southern banks of lake George. Notwithstanding his loss, being still superior in force to the enemy, his retreat was censured by military men as precipitate. It was alleged that he ought to have waited for the arrival of his artillery, and, being so supplied, to have proceeded in his operations against the fort. Abercrombie detached a considerable corps under colonel Bradstreet against fort Frontignac, situated at the entrance of the river St. Lawrence from lake Ontario; and another body of troops against fort Du Quesne, under general Forbes. Both these expeditions were successful. Fort Du Quesne being now a British possession, was called by a British name, and thenceforward denominated Fort Pitt.

British troops surprised and defeated.

nevertheless capture forts Frontignac and Du Quesne.

IN consequence of these advantages gained by the British troops, the Indian nations between the lakes and the Ohio very readily entered into a treaty with Great Britain. Thus, notwithstanding the repulse at Ticonderoga, the campaign of 1758 in America was very advantageous to the British interest, and very honourable to the British nation; as Louisburg had been reduced, the fortified line of communication in the back settlements broken, the Indians in consequence reconciled, the British territories freed from the danger of invasion, and the French obliged to confine themselves to a defensive plan, while this country could now project offensive operations.

Result of the campaign honourable and advantageous to Britain.

AMHERST, encouraged by his own successes, and the general superiority of the British arms, projected the entire conquest of Canada in one campaign. He proposed, as soon as the season should admit, with the principal

⁵ In a skirmish which took place on their march, the British army and peerage suffered a great loss by the fall of lord Howe, a young nobleman of the highest promise. He was elder brother to the late earl Howe.

CHAP
I.

1759.
General
Amherst
commander in
chief:
undertakes
an expedi-
tion to Ca-
nada.

army to reduce the forts from the river St. Lawrence along the lakes still in the possession of France; to send a large body of land forces, and a strong squadron of ships of war, to undertake the siege of Quebec, the capital of French America; that he himself, after reducing the forts, should besiege Montreal, sail down the river, and join the besiegers of Quebec. In July 1759, he arrived at Ticonderoga, which, strong as it was, the enemy abandoned, and retired to Crown Point. This post they also evacuated, and the fort of Niagara was captured. The projected siege of Montreal was for this year obliged to be postponed.

General
Wolfe sent
against
Quebec.

THE command of the forces sent to Quebec was intrusted to brigadier general Wolfe, an officer who, though young, had acquired a high reputation, and had distinguished himself particularly at the capture of Louisburg. The conquest of cape Breton, by giving us the command of the entrance to the river St. Lawrence, enabled us to have the cooperation of ships of the line up to the very walls of Quebec. A fleet, consisting of seventeen ships of the line with frigates, accompanied by an army of eight thousand men, sailed up the river. The fleet was commanded by admiral Saunders, with admiral Holmes second in command. The next in military authority to general Wolfe were brigadiers Monckton and Townshend, elder son to the lord of that name,^h and brigadier Murray, brother to lord Elibank.

ON the 26th of June, the armament prepared against Canada arrived at the island of Orleans, formed by the river St. Lawrence very near its northern bank, and extending to the mouth of Quebec harbour. The town is situated at the confluence of the rivers St. Lawrence and St. Charles. It consists of an upper and lower town. The lower town is situated upon a plain along the banks of the river; the upper on a bold and lofty eminence, that runs westward behind the plain, and parallel to the river. On the east is the river St. Charles, and on the north were deep woods. The French army, under the marquis of Montcalm, was posted on the eastern bank of the river

^h Now marquis Townshend.

St. Charles, extending to the Montmorenci, with thick woods to the north. From the strong situation of the city, the English general was aware that nothing but a decisive victory would procure him success. He endeavoured, therefore, to induce the French to come to battle. Montcalm, able and cautious, would not relinquish his advantageous post. Wolfe, therefore, determined to attack him in his intrenchments. On the 31st of July, he landed his forces, under cover of the cannon of his fleet, near the western banks of the Montmorenci, and gave orders to his troops not to advance till the whole army was formed. The British grenadiers, notwithstanding these orders, rushed on to the attack, but were soon thrown into confusion by the enemy's fire, and compelled to retreat. The general advanced with the rest of the army; but the disorder occasioned by the retreat of the grenadiers, entirely disconcerted the plan of the attack, and general Wolfe was obliged to repass the river to the Isle of St. Orleans. Our gallant general had, as we have already said, expected the cooperation of Amherst; but the career of that great officer, though successful, had not been so rapid as to enable him to proceed to Quebec. General Wolfe, in his despatches to England, manifested that he knew and felt the difficulties of his situation. "We have (said he) almost the whole force of Canada to oppose. In such a choice of difficulties, I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of Great Britain I know to require the most vigorous measures; but the courage of a handful of brave men should be exerted only where there is some hope of a favourable event." The repulse at Montmorenci made a deep impression on the English general. He had a very high sense of honour, and an ardent desire of military fame; he was aware that men judge of conduct from the event, much oftener than from the circumstances, intentions, and plans of the agent. Inferior as his force was, destitute of the expected aid, great as was the strength of the enemy and of the country with which he had to contend, he well knew that if unsuccessful, he should incur censure and reproach. These considerations operated so powerfully on the susceptible mind of Wolfe, that it affected his con-

CHAP.

I.

1759.

Action
near Que-
bec.

British re-
pulsed.

Difficulties
of the un-
dertaking.

Anxiety of
Wolfe.

CHAP.
I.

1759.

Plans the
surprise of
the for-
tress:gains the
heights of
Abraham;and leads
his army to
battle.Intrepid
valour of
the
French,

stitution, naturally delicate and irritable, and produced a fever and dysentary. Feeble and distempered as he was, he determined either to effect his enterprise, or die in the attempt. He formed a design manifesting great boldness of conception: this was, to land his troops above the city on the northern banks of the river, at the base of the heights of Abraham which covered the town, to scale those precipices, and gain possession of the eminence, in reliance on which the city was on that side but slightly fortified. Having communicated his scheme to admiral Saunders, it was concerted that they should sail up the river, and proceed several leagues farther up than the spot where they intended to land, with a design of returning down during the night. They fell down soon after it was dark (Sept. 18th), and accomplished their disembarkation in secrecy and silence. Captain Cook, afterwards so famous as a circumnavigator, commanded the boats that were employed to land the troops. They proceeded to the precipice; colonel Howe,^k with the light infantry and highlanders,^l ascended the rocks with admirable courage and activity, made themselves masters of a defile, and dislodged a guard that defended a small intrenched narrow path, by which alone our forces could reach the summit. The heroic general, regardless of the distemper which preyed on him, led up his troops, and arrayed them on the heights. With such despatch was all this achieved, that the besieged were ignorant of the attempt until it was completely effected. Montcalm being informed that the enemy had possessed these commanding heights, determined to hazard a battle, by which only he concluded the town could now be saved. He passed the river St. Charles, and advanced intrepidly to meet the English. General Wolfe, perceiving the approach of the enemy, formed his line of battle. Montcalm attempted to flank the left of the English, but was prevented by the skill and activity of brigadier Townshend, who presented a double front to the enemy. A very warm engagement took place. General Wolfe, standing in the front of his line, inspired and directed his valiant soldiers. At this time the French

^k Afterwards sir William.^l The forty-second regiment.

had begun their fire at too great a distance to do much execution. The British forces reserved their shot until the enemy were very near, and then discharged with the most terrible effect. The whole army, and each individual corps, exerted themselves with the greatest intrepidity, activity, and skill. They had just succeeded in making an impression on the centre of the enemy, when their heroic general received a wound in the wrist. Pretending not to notice this, he wrapped his handkerchief round it, and proceeded with his orders, without the smallest emotion. Advancing at the head of his grenadiers, where the charge was thickest, a ball pierced his breast. Being obliged to retire to a little distance, when his surrounding friends were in the utmost anxiety about his wound, his sole concern was about the fate of the battle. A messenger arriving, he asked, "How are our troops?" "The enemy are visibly broken." Almost faint, he reclined his head on the arm of an officer, when his faculties were aroused by the distant sound of "They fly?" Starting up, he called, "Who fly?"—"The French."—"What (said he, with exultation) do they fly already? then I die happy." So saying, he expired in the arms of victory.^m Generals Monckton and Townshend, after the death of the commander in chief, continued the battle with unremitting ardour. Monckton being wounded, the command devolved upon Townshend. Though the English were greatly superior, the battle was still not completely gained. The British troops being somewhat disordered in their successful pursuit, the general marshalled them with great expedition. Montcalm having exerted every means that could be employed by a skilful general and valiant soldier to rally and animate his troops, was mortally wounded. The French fled on all sides, and the British victory was complete. Quebec capitulated to general Townshend.

overpowered by English heroism.

The general wounded;

dies in the arms of victory.

Quebec surrenders.

SOME writers have endeavoured to attribute the success of this celebrated enterprise, in a considerable degree,

^m The circumstances of his death, so picturesque and glorious, naturally suggests to the historical reader a comparison with the death of Epaminondas at Mantinea, and of Gustavus Adolphus; and produced some pretty affecting poems in the English and Latin languages, both on the death of Wolfe, and its resemblance to that of the other heroes.

CHAP.

I.

1759.

Causes of
this signal
achievement.

to accident. There were, said they, sentinels disposed along the river, who might have discovered the approach of the British troops to the precipice of Abraham, and if they had made the discovery, could have given the alarm in time to prevent success. The amount of this reasoning is, that when a purpose is to be effected by despatch, secrecy, and surprise, if these be not employed, the attempt will not be successful. The success of this design was owing to its probable impracticability. The enemy were not alarmed for the safety of a post which they deemed impregnable. The sagacity of our general penetrated into their sentiments, and he formed his project on the moral certainty of their secure inattention to that quarter. His reasoning was fair and just, in the circumstances of the case: the design originated in military genius: it was a very bold, and even a hazardous undertaking; but such attempts, the general history of wars, and of British wars in particular, would teach us to encourage; because, on the whole, they have been oftener successful than otherwise.

THE news of this glorious victory and important acquisition excited the most lively joy in England. Every honour was bestowed on the memory of the hero who had achieved the conquest, and the warmest thanks were given to the generals and admirals who had been instrumental to its execution.

By the great and rapid successes of 1759, joined with and proceeding from the advantages of 1758, France had not only been driven from her encroachments in North America, but deprived of her most valuable original possessions. Montreal and the rest of Canada still remained under her power, after the capture of Quebec.

1760.
Campaign
in Ame-
rica.

In the following campaign, the efforts of the French in that quarter of the globe were directed to the recapture of Quebec, which they determined to attempt early in the season, before the river should be open for the admission of the reinforcements about to arrive from England. General Murray, then governor of that city, took every precaution to maintain so important an acquisition. As the French approached, being advantageously posted in the neighbourhood of Quebec, he determined, though inferior

in number, to risk an engagement; hoping, through the bravery of his troops, for a success which would damp the spirits of the enemy; and knowing that, if disappointed, he could securely shelter himself in Quebec. Being unsuccessful, he retreated to that city, which was immediately invested by the enemy.

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The French attempt to recover Quebec;

It being now the month of May, and the river open, intelligence arrived that the British fleet and troops were sailing up to Quebec. The French raised the siege with great precipitation, leaving their provisions, stores, and artillery, in the hands of the British. The governor general of Canada now centered all his hopes in the defence of Montreal; which, concluding that it would be attacked by general Amherst, he strengthened with new fortifications; at the same time raising new levies of troops, and collecting large magazines of military stores. The English general, as the French governor apprehended, undertook the siege of Montreal; and, to facilitate his operations, reduced several small posts up the river. Having arrived at Montreal, he was soon joined by general Murray from Quebec, and invested the place in September 1760. The French governor, despairing of relief, capitulated; and all Canada surrendered to the British arms. Thus did the ambition of France, after compelling this country to go to war by its unjust aggressions in North America, during the first years of hostilities, while the convulsions of our councils prevented effectual measures on our part for its suppression, prove successful; but when dissension yielded to unanimity, when incapacity gave way to genius, when wise counsel selected for the execution of its plans the ablest agents, and prompt and decisive vigour afforded the most effectual means of execution, the ambitious enemy was not only checked, but overthrown; France was deprived of her unjust acquisitions, and bereft of her most valuable ancient territories, which, but for her own aggression, she might have enjoyed unmolested. Such was the change effected during the three years that Mr. Pitt had presided at the helm of affairs; and such was our situation in America in October 1760.

and are repulsed.

General Murray completes the conquest of Canada.

Result of operations in America, in October 1760.

Affairs of Europe.

In Europe, though the first operations projected by Pitt had been unsuccessful, the disappointment was by all

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I.

1760.
Expedition
to the coast
of Nor-
mandy.

acknowledged not to have been owing to the want of adequate preparation, and the succeeding plans were attended with no less success than in America. Early in 1758, a new expedition was projected against the coast of France, the object of which was to destroy the maritime power of the enemy. By the latter end of May two squadrons were ready; one consisting of eleven ships of the line, under lord Anson and sir Edward Hawke, to watch the motions of the Brest fleet; the other consisting of four ships of the line with seven frigates, commanded by commodore Richard Howe, to convoy the transports that carried the land forces, consisting of sixteen battalions, and nine troops of light horse, destined for the coast of Normandy, under the command of Charles duke of Marlborough. They sailed from Portsmouth on the 1st of June,ⁿ and landed on the 5th in Castle Bay, on the coast of Brittany; thence they marched to St. Maloes, the principal harbour on the channel for privateers, and which greatly distressed the English trade. Finding that place too strong to be taken by assault, they contented themselves with setting fire to about a hundred sail of shipping, the greater number of them privateers, and to several magazines filled with naval stores. From the coast of Brittany they sailed across the bay towards Normandy, but were prevented by a violent storm from effecting a landing. They returned to St. Helens to refit; and, the duke of Marlborough being called to another service, general Bligh was appointed to command the land forces. In August the armament again sailed to the coast of Normandy, and anchored before Cherburg. This place, in the midst of the channel, well situated for protecting the commerce of France, for annoying that of England, and even for facilitating an invasion, had been strongly fortified. The English armament attacked and captured the town, destroyed the harbour and bason, (a work of much ingenuity, charge, and labour,) razed the fortifications, and took considerable quantities of ordnance, and naval and military stores. Again attempting St. Maloes,

ⁿ A day, thirty-six years after, so auspicious to the naval glory of England and Howe.

the English army met with a check at St. Cas, on which they returned to England. CHAP.
I.

THE naval operations in Europe in 1758 were not decisively important, though Britain had a manifest superiority. Sir Edward Hawke and lord Anson almost annihilated the French trade on the western coasts. In the Mediterranean, admiral Osborn dispersed the French fleet off Carthage, and established the superiority of the English in that part of the world. This year the English navy was also successful in Africa. Mr. Cumming, an African merchant, of the sect of quakers, presented to the minister a plan for the reduction of fort Lewis on the river Senegal. This project being approved, a small squadron was equipped under the command of commodore Marsh. Mr. Cumming^o went on board that officer's ship, in order to forward and guide the expedition. Some armed vessels that opposed the British at their entrance into the river, dispersed; and the fort and adjoining factory surrendered. In the latter end of the year, a British squadron, commanded by commodore Keppell, made an attack on the island of Goree, situated southward of the Senegal; and compelled it to surrender, notwithstanding its being defended by two forts, and batteries amounting to above a hundred pieces of cannon. During the attack, the African shores were covered by multitudes of the natives, who expressed by loud clamours and uncouth gesticulations; their astonishment at the terrible effects of European artillery.

1760.
Naval
transac-
tions,

In 1759, greater naval preparations were made than in the former year. Admiral Boscawen, being now returned from America, was appointed to command a British fleet in the Mediterranean. The French had prepared powerful armaments both at Toulon and Brest. Boscawen blocked up the enemy's fleet at Toulon; but, being obliged to return to Gibraltar to refit, the French took the opportunity of putting to sea, hoping to pass the Straits, and join the Brest fleet. Admiral Boscawen, having now refitted his damaged ships, prepared to meet the enemy. On the

^o Mr. Cumming defended his conduct as perfectly consonant to his religious principles, affirming himself to have been previously persuaded that it would prove a bloodless conquest.

CHAP. 18th of August, having come up with them off cape Lagos in Portugal, he entirely defeated the hostile fleet; and four ships of the line surrendered to the British.

1760.
Signal victory of
Boscawen
off cape
Lagos.

THE French were making great preparations, with an intention, it was thought, of invading either Britain or Ireland. Intelligence being received that a number of flat-bottomed boats were ready at Havre de Grace, for the purpose, as it was conceived, of landing their troops, Admiral Rodney was sent, in the beginning of July, with a squadron of ships and bombs to the coast of Normandy. Anchoring in the road of Havre, he commenced the bombardment, burnt a considerable part of the town, destroyed many of their boats, and consumed a quantity of their stores.

THE principal preparations, however, were making at Brest, where a formidable fleet was equipped under admiral Conflans. Against that force the chief fleet of England was directed, under sir Edward Hawke; who arrived on the coast of France before the Brest fleet had left the harbour, and blocking them up, long prevented them from sailing.

IN the beginning of November, the British fleet was by stress of weather driven from the coast of France, and compelled to anchor at Torbay. The French admiral seized the opportunity of sailing from Brest, with twenty-one ships of the line and four frigates. Informed of their departure, Hawke sailed in pursuit of them, and arrived in Quiberon Bay, which the enemy had then reached. The French admiral retired close to shore, with a view to draw the English squadron among the shoals and islands, on which he expected they would be wrecked; while he himself and his officers, perfectly acquainted with the navigation of the place, could either stay and take advantage of the disaster, or, if necessary, retire through channels unknown to the British pilots. The days were now very short, the weather was extremely tempestuous, and there was the farther disadvantage of a leeshore. Admiral Hawke, not deterred by a leeshore even during the storms of winter, pursued, and at three in the afternoon, attacked the enemy with that adventurous boldness which has generally marked British warriors, and been so often

productive of British success. Sir Edward, in the Royal George, ordered the master to bring him along side of the French admiral, who commanded on board the *Soleil Royal*. The pilot remonstrated on the danger of obeying the command, as there was a great probability that they would run upon a shoal. "You have done your duty" (replied the admiral) in showing the danger; now you are to comply with orders, and lay me along side of the "*Soleil Royal*." The command was obeyed and the battle became general. Four of the French ships were burnt or sunk during the action, and one was taken; the intervention of night only prevented the destruction of the whole French fleet. The next day another ship, being stranded on the shoals, was burnt. This victory gave a finishing blow to the naval power of the enemy, and prevented them from making any important attempt during the remainder of the war.^p

IN 1760, admirals Hawke and Boscawen were alternately stationed in Quiberon bay and the adjacent coasts, thereby employing a great body of French forces, under the idea that an invasion was intended; and several advantages were gained. Admiral Rodney destroyed a considerable quantity of shipping, both mercantile and warlike; but as the enemy had only an inconsiderable fleet, no important exploit was achieved in those seas. The most noted enterprises in the channel, or adjacent oceans, in the year 1760, were those in which the famous Thurot headed the army. This bold and enterprising adventurer, in the beginning of the war, had been master of a Dunkirk privateer. In 1758, he had with his ship^q done great execution in the north seas; had taken numbers of merchantmen; and had once maintained an obstinate engagement against two English frigates, and compelled them to desist from their attack. Becoming known to the court of Versailles, he was in 1759 employed to command a small armament, fitting out in the harbour of Dunkirk. Toward

Thurot.

^p The English, from the beginning of the war, had already taken and destroyed twenty-seven French ships of the line, and thirty-one frigates; and two of their great ships with four frigates, perished; so that their whole loss, in this particular, amounted to sixty-four; whereas the loss of Great Britain did not exceed seven sail of the line, and five frigates.

^q Called the *Belleisle*, and carrying forty-four guns.

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the end of that year he sailed, designing to invade Scotland or Ireland, as opportunity might serve. Commodore Boys pursued him to the north seas, but was obliged to put into Leith for a supply of provisions, during which time Thurot escaped his reach. Being overtaken by a storm, he parted company with one of his thirty gun ships, and was driven into Bergen, where he was detained by stress of weather nineteen days; after which time he sailed for the western islands of Scotland, with a view to proceed to the north of Ireland. The weather, however, again becoming stormy, he parted from his twenty-four gun ship; and being entreated by his officers to return with his now diminished force, declared that he would not again show himself in France until he had struck some blow for the service of his country. Landing in the island of Isla, one of the Hebrides, he behaved with much moderation and generosity, paying a fair price for cattle and other provisions which he found there. Meanwhile this adventurer had alarmed all the coasts of Britain and Ireland. Regular troops and militia were posted in various places, where it was thought that he would most probably attempt a landing. Commodore Boys pursued him round the Orkneys, while ships of war were ordered to scour St. George's Channel, in order to intercept his return. In February 1760, sailing from Isla, he proceeded to the bay of Carrickfergus. On the 21st of that month, he effected a landing, and attacked the town, which colonel Jennings, with a force greatly inferior, defended with intrepidity and skill, and made an obstinate resistance; and even after the enemy had taken one part of the town, continued to defend the remainder,^r but was at last obliged to yield to the force of the enemy. He surrendered by capitulation, by which he preserved the castle from attack. Meanwhile, the Irish militia assembling from all the neighbouring districts, Thurot found it necessary to depart.

^r The following note, which I transcribe from Smollett's history, will, I doubt not, be acceptable to my readers, as a striking instance of the union of courage and humanity. "While the French and English were hotly engaged in one of the streets, a little child ran playfully between them, having no idea of the danger to which it was exposed: a common soldier of the enemy, perceiving the life of this poor innocent at stake, grounded his piece, advanced deliberately between the lines of the fire, took up the child in his arms, and conveyed it to a place of safety; then returning to his place, resumed his musket, and renewed his hostility."

AT this time captain John Elliot, a young officer who had already greatly distinguished himself by acts of valour, having sailed from Kinsale with three frigates, was on his way to meet Thurot. On the 28th of February he descried him off the Isle of Man, and immediately gave signal for battle, in which Thurot very readily engaged. Both sides fought very valiantly, but the Britons carried the day. The adventurous hero was killed, and his ships surrendered themselves to the conquerors. The name of Thurot had become so terrible to merchants, that the defeat and capture of his squadron were celebrated with as hearty rejoicings as the most important victory could have produced.

THE West Indies, at the commencement of the war, W. Indies. had been but little attended to by an administration, equally narrow in its views as feeble in its resolutions. Commodore Frankland had been sent, in 1755, with four ships of the line; and admiral Coats had, in the beginning of 1757, taken the command: but nothing material had been done. Toward the end of 1757, a British squadron, much inferior to the French in point of force, engaged them off cape François, and forced them to retreat in a scattered condition. Several other actions took place, but these were unimportant in the result.

THE comprehensive genius of Mr. Pitt was directed with vigour and effect, not to a part, but to the whole interests of his country. He attacked the enemy in every quarter where they could be annoyed by attack. He proposed, in 1758, to send an expedition against the French settlements in the West Indies, and a strong armament was equipped under general Hobson and commodore Moore, who commanded the land and sea forces. They arrived in the West Indies at the latter end of 1758. Martinico was the first object of their destination; but, finding that island very strongly defended, they proceeded to Gaudaloupe, thirty leagues to the westward. Arriving there on the 23d of January, they made a general attack upon the citadel, the town, and the various batteries by which it was defended. The enemy made an obstinate resistance; but their cannon being at last silenced, the British troops were enabled to land; on which

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1760.

East India.

the French abandoned the town and its fortifications. In the interior parts of Gaudaloupe a vigorous resistance was made, but at length proved ineffectual. The whole island was conquered, and the neighbouring islands of Deseada and Marigalante surrendered themselves to the British arms. Though, in 1760, the operations of Britain in the West Indies were not so splendid as in the preceding year, they were far from being unimportant. A dangerous insurrection took place among the slaves in Jamaica, which was suppressed, not without great difficulty. The British completely protected the trade of their country, annoyed that of the enemy, and destroyed or took numbers of French privateers, and several ships of war. On the whole, they had in that quarter gained valuable acquisitions from the enemy, and so completely established their superiority, as to have paved the way for future conquest.

THE same general policy which directed France to her encroachments in America, had also extended to India; but, that we may have a clear view of the operations and events in that quarter, it is necessary to consider the state of our settlements and those of the French, at the time when our narrative begins. Immense have been the accessions to British power and influence in that country, during the period of which our history treats; but of both progress and results we can judge only by first taking a view of the outset.

AT the conclusion of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the possessions of the English in India were merely commercial factories, guarded by forts near the seacoast, or on the great navigable rivers. They had penetrated very little into the interior parts of the country, except on the banks of the Ganges. At this time, England had, on the Malabar, or western coast of the peninsula, possessed Surat, at no great distance from the mouth of the Indus, and the most northern settlement on that coast. Proceeding southward, their next factory was Bombay, situated on a small island. After that came Tillicherry, fifteen leagues from which was Calicut. The last and most southern settlement which they possessed on the Malabar coast, was Anjengo. Doubling cape Comorin, and coming to the coast of Coromandel, the first English establishment that met the

sailor, was fort St. Davids. Farther to the northward, was the principal possession on the eastern coast, fort St. George, called Madras, from its contiguity to that city, which, with several villages in the vicinity, was purchased in the last century, by the East India company from the king of Golconda. Still farther to the northward, was the chief British settlement in India, fort William, close to the town of Calcutta, situated in the kingdom of Bengal, on the Hoogley, a branch of the Ganges. Beside these settlements, the English had several interior factories for the purposes of trade, which were secured by forts. They had also settlements at Bencoolen, and other parts of India beyond the Ganges.

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THE principal French possession was the city of Pondicherry, on the Coromandel coast, between forts St. David and St. George. This was a large and populous town. On the Malabar coast they had also established factories at Surat and Calicut, and at Rajapore. On the Ganges they had a factory at Chandernagore, above Calcutta.

Designs,
and proceedings
of the
French.

WHEN peace was concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle, M. Dupleix was the French governor general in India. He was a man of great ability and soaring ambition, who projected the establishment of the empire of France in Hindostan. For that purpose he embraced the same policy which had been adopted by his countrymen in America, of stirring up the natives against the British settlers. All the provinces and kingdoms of Hindostan had belonged to the empire of the mogul; but his power had been so much reduced by Kouli Khan, that he was not able to assert his former authority over such extensive dominions. The princes that had been tributary, and even the subahs and nabobs, who had been governors appointed by him, his own officers and servants, now refused to acknowledge his superiority, and asserted their independent supremacy over their respective territories. These princes or chieftains very often quarrelled with one another, and naturally solicited the assistance of European settlers in their neighbourhood; while the Europeans, on the other hand, endeavoured to interest the native princes in their contests. Dupleix, seeing that they might be useful tools in the execution of his project, paid great court to these chiefs,

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1760.

especially such of them as showed themselves bold and unprincipled adventurers. Nizam Amuluck, the subah or viceroy of Decan, having officially the appointment of a nabob or governor of Arcot, had nominated Anaverdi Khan to that office. The viceroy dying, was succeeded by his son Nazirzing, whom the mogul confirmed. Between the subah and the English at fort St. George, there was an amicable intercourse. Dupleix supported a pretender to the office, Muza Pherzing, cousin to the other; and found means to engage Chunda Saib, an enterprising adventurer, in favour of the pretender, against the legally constituted viceroy.^s A body of English troops advanced; the French, afraid of an engagement, retired. The pretender, abandoned by his own army, threw himself on the mercy of his cousin, who spared his life, but for his own security kept him in confinement. Dupleix, disappointed in his project of raising by his own force an usurper who would be subservient to his designs, formed a conspiracy against the viceroy's life. The chief conspirators were his prime minister and two of his nabobs. Encouraged and stimulated by the Frenchman, they murdered their master, and, releasing the cousin, proclaimed him viceroy of Decan. The usurper associated M. Dupleix with himself in the government. In the tents of the murdered viceroy they found an immense treasure, of which a great share fell to Dupleix, the promoter of the crime. The usurping colleagues in the viceroyalty attacked the nabob of Arcot, who was legally appointed by the royal viceroy, and under the protection of the English presidency at Madras. They dispossessed him of his government, and appointed Chunda Saib, their own agent, nabob of Arcot. The English, considering these proceedings as an aggression on their ally, and as tending to raise the French influence to a very dangerous height, sent a considerable force to repel the usurper and his French auxiliaries. The British troops were commanded by the celebrated Clive. This gentleman entered into the service of the East India company as a writer; but being formed for more arduous situations, and desirous of a military life, he had offered

Clive.

his services in that capacity, and was employed to command in this expedition. With such resolution, secrecy, and despatch, did he proceed, that the enemy knew nothing of his approach until he was actually before their capital; and the capture of Arcot, an important acquisition to the British interest, was farther memorable, from being the first occasion in which Clive displayed his extraordinary talents. Meanwhile, the usurper of the Decan having been murdered, Sallabah Sing, the younger of the two brothers of the former viceroy, was proclaimed by M. Dupleix, in opposition to the elder, who had been appointed by the mogul, and supported by the English. The usurper, finding means to cut off his brother by poison, and considering himself as undoubted viceroy, made a grant to M. Dupleix of all the English possessions north from Pondicherry, consequently including Madras. Dupleix was, in 1753, preparing to avail himself of this grant, when he was recalled to Europe, and a successor appointed. *Sieur Godeheu*, the new French governor, being of a less daring character than Dupleix, did not venture to carry his designs into execution, but proceeded more secretly against the English interest, by stimulating the native princes to hostilities. While he was pursuing these measures, he professed the most pacific intentions, and even concluded a provincial treaty with the presidency of Madras. War, however, soon commenced in the Carnatic; and there the English, commanded by general *Stringer Lawrence*, were on the whole successful. But a severe blow was struck against them in another quarter of India, a blow which may be traced to the artifices and intrigues of the French. *Alli Verdi Khan*, subah of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, a man of great abilities, having died in April 1756, was succeeded by his adopted son, *Sou Rajah Dowla*, a young man weak in his understanding, violent in his passions, and profligate in his morals. The old viceroy on his deathbed, had exhorted Dowla to bend his principal attention to the reduction of the English. Impressed with these ideas, the young subah, soon after his accession, marched to Calcutta, and summoned the fort and city to surrender. Mr. *Holwell* the governor, with a few officers, and a very

Capture of
Calcutta.

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feeble garrison, maintained the city and fort with uncommon resolution and courage, against several attacks, until he was overpowered by numbers, and the enemy had forced their way into the castle. He then submitted, the subah having promised, on the word of a soldier, that no injury should be done to him or his garrison. Nevertheless, they were all driven, to the number of a hundred and forty-six persons of both sexes, into a place called the Black Hole prison, a cube of about eighteen feet, in which there was hardly any current of air. Here they were exposed to a scene of as cruel distress as can be conceived; most of them died in the greatest agony, but Mr. Holwell and a few others came out alive.

COLONEL CLIVE was at this time employed in the company's service in another part of India. On the Malabar coast, he and admiral Watson reduced Angria, a piratical prince, who had been extremely formidable to all those countries. Returning in triumph to Madras, they concerted measures for the restoration of the British affairs in Bengal. On the 1st of January 1757, the company's armament arrived off Calcutta. The admiral, with two ships, attacked the town, and, though opposed by the enemy's batteries, in two hours silenced their guns; on which, as fast as possible, they abandoned the place and fort. Colonel Clive attacked the town in another quarter, and by his intrepid conduct facilitated the reduction of the settlement. Soon after he attacked and took Hoogley, a city of great trade, and containing immense stores, magazines, and riches, belonging to the sabah. The viceroy of Bengal advanced with an army of 20,000 horse and 15,000 foot, being resolved to expel the English out of his dominions. On the 2d of February, he arrived opposite the English camp, within a mile of Calcutta. Clive, being reinforced from the fleet, drew up his army and attacked the enemy so vigorously, that the viceroy retreated with the loss of a thousand men killed or taken prisoners, and a great number of horses with all their spoils. Intimidated by his defeat, the viceroy, on the 9th of February, made a peace, the general principle of which was, that the factories and possessions taken from the English company should be restored; that their losses should be completely

Clive restores the British interest.

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1760.

compensated; that whatever rights and privileges had in any former time been granted by the mogul, should be confirmed and established for the future; and that the English should have the liberty to fortify Calcutta in any manner which they should judge expedient. Having concluded this treaty with the viceroy, colonel Clive and admiral Watson turned their victorious arms against the French, and attacked their fortress and factory at Chandernagore, situated farther up the Ganges than Calcutta, strongly fortified, and the most important settlement of the French at Bengal. It was garrisoned by five hundred Europeans and twelve hundred natives. Clive, now reinforced by troops from Bombay, invested the place on the land side; admirals Watson and Pococke attacked it on the Ganges; their united efforts soon compelled the enemy to submit, and the place was surrendered. The ammunition, stores, effects and money, found in Chandernagore, were very considerable; but the chief advantage of the conquest arose from depriving the enemy of their principal settlement on the Ganges, which had greatly interfered with the English commerce on that river. The viceroy was far from being pleased with the progress of the English. He, indeed, discovered a great partiality towards the French, and evidently showed an intention of joining them as soon as he should be prepared for hostilities. He evaded the performance of the articles of the treaty which he had so lately signed, and concerted with French agents to attack the English, while they promised him the assistance of such a body of European troops as would enable him to drive them out of his vicinity. Mr. Watts, a man of ability, was then English resident at the viceroy's court, and possessed considerable influence with the subah's ministers. He not only learned, and was able to communicate to the council of Calcutta, the intentions of the subah, but found means to form a party against him in his own country. The subah, by all the arrogant insolence of a mean and despicable mind in high power, had provoked the enmity of the chief men in his court and army. A plan was concerted for depriving him of his power, and conducted by Meer Jaffier Ally Khan, his near ally by marriage, prime minister, and chief commander of the

Treachery
of the vic-
roy.

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Clive takes
the field.Battle of
Plassey.Victory of
the Eng-
lish.Revolution
in Bengal,
and Jaffier
made vice-
roy.

army. The project being communicated to Mr. Watts, he sent intelligence of it to the company, and by the company's authority concluded a treaty with the malcontents for depriving Dowlah of a power which he was trying to render destructive to the English interest. Colonel Clive, strongly urged by Jaffier, took the field to assist the malcontents. The English commander, with a handful of troops, began his march. Crossing the Ganges, he advanced to Plassey, within one day's march of Moorshedabad, the capital of Bengal. There he found the viceroy encamped with seventy thousand men, in all the feeble magnificence which eastern effeminacy has in all ages brought against European hardiness, courage, and resources of intellect. The elephants, with their scarlet housings, the rich and variegated embroidery of their tents and standards, the glittering parade and costly decorations of their cavalry, their gilded canopies, equalled any of the pageantry which a Persian satrap or king ever brought against the wisdom, strength, or valour, of Greece or Macedon. The subah, as weak and timid in difficulty and danger, as insolent and overbearing in safety and prosperity, now courted the forgiveness and friendship of Meer Jaffier; and, believing that he had prevailed, gave him the command of his left wing. Colonel Clive, with about three thousand two hundred men, advanced against more than twenty times that number. Jaffier took no part whatever in the action; the rest of the Indian troops were completely defeated, with the loss on the side of the conquerors of only seventy men. Colonel Clive, with wise policy, forbearing to express any resentment against the part which Jaffier from indecision and double treachery had acted, saw that he would be a useful tool in the hands of England. He saluted him sabah of the three provinces, and exhorted him to pursue his march to Moorshedabad, engaging to follow him immediately with his army. Arriving at the capital, colonel Clive deposed Surajah Dowlah, and with great solemnity substituted in his place Jaffier, who was publicly acknowledged by the people as viceroy of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. Jaffier put to death his predecessor, and granted to his allies and supporters the English, all the conditions on compliance with

which they granted his vice-royalty. He paid into the treasury of the company a crore of rupees,¹ as an indemnification for their losses at Calcutta, and ceded to them a considerable territory in the vicinity of that city. Thus, in the space of fourteen days, a great revolution was effected, and the command of a country superier in extent, fruitfulness, riches, and population, to most European kingdoms, was, by a handful of troops, who were headed by an officer bred to a civil profession and not instructed in the art of war, transferred to a company of merchants residing in one of the most remote corners of the globe. Thus ended the war with Surajah Dowlah, in which the viceroy of Bengal was not only the aggressor, but had to the utmost extent of his power perpetrated the most atrocious cruelties. The subsequent conduct of Clive was necessary to procure justice to his injured country. After the subah had concluded a peace, which restored to the English their rights, and indemnified them for their wrongs, he immediately entered into a concert with their enemies for violating the peace, and depriving them of their long established possessions and privileges; but being as weak as wicked, he fell a sacrifice to his own ill conducted villany.

WHILE the northern provinces of India engrossed the principal attention of the company's council and officers, the French took advantage of the temporary absence of their forces from the coast of Coromandel, and attacked Ingeram, Vizagapatam, and other settlements in that quarter.

IN 1758, large reinforcements arrived under M. Lally, with a strong squadron under M. d'Apche, and the enemy projected the entire conquest of the English possessions on that coast. They invested fort St. Davids in the south part of the Carnatic, and, before an English force could arrive to its assistance, compelled it to surrender. Lally also attacked Tanjore, because the rajah had distinguished himself as the zealous and faithful ally of the English. The French general demanded of him a sum of money

¹ A rupee is about 2s. 6d.; a lack is 100,000 rupees, that is about 12,500l.; a crore is a hundred lacks; consequently, 1,250,000l.

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I.

1760

Naval operations in the Indian seas.

which would have amounted to 810,000*l*. Being refused, he invested the city; but the rajah's native troops, assisted by British engineers, made so vigorous a defence, that the French general was repulsed with loss, and obliged to raise the siege. Retreating northwards from Tanjore, he took possession of the city of Arcot, and made preparations for the siege of Madras. The English were at this time so much surpassed in land force, that during the remainder of the campaign they acted on the defensive.

THE same year admiral Pococke succeeded to the command of the British fleets in India, on the death of admiral Watson. On the 26th of March, he came up with the enemy's ships in the road of fort St. David's, and attacked them in the afternoon. D'Apche having fought warmly for two hours, in the evening retreated. The misbehaviour of three of his captains^u prevented Pococke from a successful pursuit. The next day he learned, that the enemy had lost a ship of the line, which had been damaged in the engagement. About five hundred of the enemy were killed or wounded, and scarcely one hundred of the English. This was the first action ever fought between a British and French fleet in the Indian seas; and, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which admiral Pococke laboured, it was auspicious to England.

ADMIRAL Pococke having gone into harbour, to repair the damage incurred by his fleet; as soon as he was refitted, set sail again in quest of the enemy. Having cruised for several weeks, he found them on the 27th of July at anchor in Pondicherry road. On descrying the English fleet, the French unmoored and fled, Pococke closely pursuing the enemy, could not come up with them till the 3d of August, when having obtained the weathergage, he bore down on them in order of battle. The engagement began with great fury on both sides; but in a short time the French retreated towards Pondicherry. Night intervening, they escaped; but their ships were so much damaged, that they were obliged to sail to the Mauritius to refit, and thus leave to England the sovereignty of the Indian seas.

British successful.

^u Two of the English captains being tried, were dismissed the service; and the third was deprived of his rank as post captain for one year.

BUT the completion of British victory over the French in India was reserved for the glorious 1759. In the month of December 1758, Lally began his march towards Madras, and in the beginning of January commenced the investment of that important fortress. The besieged, though inferior to him in strength, made a gallant defence. The event was for some weeks doubtful; but a considerable reinforcement of troops and stores arriving, conducted by captain Kempenfelt, M. Lally raised the siege, and retreated to Arcot, extremely chagrined at his ill success.

ABOUT the same time a detachment under colonel Ford dispossessed the French of Vizagapatam and Masulipatam. The subah of the decan, who had been favourable to the French as long as they appeared superior, finding the English now so powerful in his neighbourhood, proposed a treaty to the government of Madras. An alliance was accordingly concluded, by which he renounced all connexion with France, and ceded the entire circar of Masulipatam to the company; who, on their part, engaged not to assist or countenance the subah's enemies.

COLONEL COOTE now commanded the English forces in the Carnatic, and, being able to act on the offensive, proceeded against Lally. Having gained several advantages over the enemy, he endeavoured to bring him to a general engagement, which he effected at Wandwalsh. In this battle* the English gained a great and important victory, which decided the fate of French India on the Coromandel coast. Lally, with the remainder of his troops, retired to Pondicherry. The British general recovered Arcot; and, except Pondicherry, the French had now no settlement of any importance in the Carnatic.

THE conquest of Arcot finished the campaign.^y Admiral Pococke, during the same campaign, again defeated the French, and compelled them to leave those seas. On the Malabar coast, a squadron of English,

Conquest
of Arcot.

* From the detail of this engagement, to be found in Smollett, it appears, that great valour was displayed on both sides; but that the French general was rash and impetuous; and that the victory of the English was owing to colonel Coote's superior skill.

^y The campaign somewhat exceeded the boundaries of 1759, Arcot being taken in the beginning of February 1760.

CHAP. under captain Richard Maitland, made themselves masters
 I of the factory of Surat.

1760.

Transac-
 tions in
 Europe of
 Britain
 with her
 allies.

Compre-
 hensive
 and ener-
 getic poli-
 cy of Mr.
 Pitt.

THUS we have seen French aggression, after being for a time successful, rousing British energy, and producing British victory; we have seen her attempts to exalt herself by humbling England, lead to her own humiliation, and the aggrandizement of her rival; and we have seen her unjust and unwarrantable ambition discomfited. Such was the state of affairs where Britain was engaged for herself solely; we must now follow her, to her cooperation with allies. We left Frederic in winter quarters, after the campaign of 1757, that glorious era in his history. In England, the king of Prussia, since the dissolution of his political connexion with France, and his alliance with this country, had become a very popular character. This predilection rose to enthusiasm, on his gaining the victory at Rosebach over the ancient enemy of Britain. The union of the two catholic powers was by many considered as a confederacy to oppress and subvert the protestant interest in Germany. The English applauded and extolled Frederic as the protestant hero, and, anxious for his success, were willing to contribute toward his support and defence. Mr. Pitt, having taken a view of the state of affairs on the continent, as well as the whole operations of the year, saw that the strenuous efforts of Britain were necessary to preserve the balance of power; and that exertions in Germany, by employing the strength of France in that quarter, would weaken her operations in America. He therefore proposed, that a strong army should cooperate with the king of Prussia in Germany in the ensuing campaign. A subsidiary treaty was concluded by which the king of England stipulated to pay into the hands of his Prussian majesty, the annual sum of 670,000*l.* to be employed at his discretion for the good of the common cause; and parliament cheerfully voted the necessary supplies for that object, and other purposes of the war.

THE convention of Cloister seven was considered as a disgrace to the nation, and also as infringing by the subsequent conduct of the French in Hanover. The army, which had been dispersed by that treaty, was reassembled

in British pay, and the command, by the advice of Mr. Pitt, bestowed on prince Ferdinand of Brunswick; whose object in the campaign of 1758 was to drive eighty thousand French troops from Lower Saxony and Westphalia. His own forces at the beginning of the campaign consisted of only thirty thousand Hanoverians, but they were afterwards joined by the troops of Hesse Cassel and Brunswick, whom England engaged by subsidies to assist in the deliverance of Germany. The plan of operations concerted with Frederic was, to compel the enemy to evacuate Brunswick and Hanover, through the fear of having their communication with the Rhine intercepted. For these purposes he sent in March two detachments to the Weser, of which one gained possession of Verden, the other, under the command of his nephew the hereditary prince, took possession of the strong and important post of Floyer. In April, prince Ferdinand himself, crossing the Aller, advanced south towards Brunswick, assisted by a detachment of Prussian troops under prince Henry, the king's brother. M. Clermont, who had succeeded Richlieu in the command of the French forces, apprehensive of being cut off from his intercourse with the Rhine, evacuated Brunswick, Wolfenbuttle, and Hanover, and marched to Westphalia. Crossing the Weser, Ferdinand besieged Minden, and took it in sight of the enemy's army. Count Clermont now retreated towards the Rhine; repassed it at Wesel in May; and stationed the army on the left bank of the river, after having lost a number of his troops, which were taken in the retreat. Ferdinand would not suffer them to remain undisturbed within the boundaries of Germany. In June, he attacked them at Crevelt near Cleves, and gained a victory more glorious to his military character than decisive in its consequences. The prince of Soubise, who commanded a considerable body of French, having defeated a detachment of Hessians, Ferdinand was obliged to act on the defensive, and the affairs of France began to wear a more favourable aspect. In July, twelve thousand British troops arriving from England under the command of the duke of Marlborough to reinforce the allies, Ferdinand now resumed his offensive operations. Through his judicious, well-planned, and

Operations
in Bruns-
wick, un-
der prince
Ferdin-
and:

On the
Rhine.

Battle of
Crevelt.

CHAP. I. well-executed movements, he completely effected the object of the campaign, by driving the French out of Lower Saxony and Westphalia.^a

1760.

Exploits of
Frederic.

THE king of Prussia now endeavoured to make the utmost advantage of the victories which he had gained, at the close of the preceding campaign. Of Silesia, the fortress of Schweidnitz alone remained in the hands of Austria. This place, which was blockaded during winter, on the return of spring he attacked by a regular siege. Commencing his works on the 2d of April, he on the 15th carried the garrison by assault. Having thus completely recovered Silesia, he invaded Moravia, and besieged Olmutz its capital; but, having opened the trenches at too great a distance from the town, he spent his time and ammunition uselessly; and count Daun arriving, obliged him to raise the siege. Meanwhile the Russians and Cossacks had invaded Brandenburg, and were committing the most barbarous ravages. Their army being divided into two parts, it was Frederic's object to come between them, so as to cut off their communication with each other. In this design he succeeded; and was able to bring Romanzow, with the principal division, to battle at Kustrin.^a The ready genius of the Prussian king, on perceiving the disposition of the Russian troops, formed his men in such a way, as to bear with his artillery on their thick mass, and prevent the parts of their army from supporting each other. Success followed his attempt; he gained a most decisive victory; and the loss of the enemy amounted to 17,000 men, with a great quantity of cannon and stores: the loss, on the side of the Prussians, amounted to about 1200 men. Having thus freed his country from the danger of the Russians, he hastened against the Austrians under marshal Daun. On the 14th of October, he was surprised by that general at Hochkirchin;^b suffered a defeat, but not decisive; acted with such ability, as to prevent the enemy from deriving any material advantage from a victory; and ultimately compelled Daun to retire into Bohemia. The Russians and Swedes were also obliged to withdraw to Stralsund.

Defeats
the Russians
at Kustrin.

^a Smollett, vol. iv. p. 33.

^a Gillies.

^b Smollett.

IN 1759, prince Ferdinand took the field against the French, who had again invaded Westphalia in great force, under messrs. De Contades and Broglio. Prince Ferdinand in July found them posted at Minden. The prince thinking the enemy too strongly posted to render an attack by him wise, took a position at some distance, hoping to provoke them to commence an assault, which he was well prepared to resist. The French generals very imprudently left their own strong posts to attack prince Ferdinand. The battle began at dawn, and was fought with great impetuosity on both sides till noon; when the vigour, firmness, and courage of the English INFANTRY determined the fate of the day, and gained a complete victory. The British *cavalry*, commanded by lord George Sackville, were ordered to advance, and bear down upon the enemy when routed and flying. *They did not advance, and were of no service in the battle.*^c The same day, the hereditary prince of Brunswick, who was fast rising to military eminence, having been sent by his uncle against a detachment of French at Gofeldt with six thousand men, defeated twice that number of the enemy, killed three thousand, and took as many prisoners. These successes enabled Ferdinand to drive the French a second time out of Germany, and to leave the allies in possession of every province and town which belonged to them at the declaration of war.

French invaded Westphalia.

Ferdinand and the British infantry gain a signal victory at Minden.

French driven out of Germany.

THE campaign of 1759 was far from being equally prosperous to the Prussian monarch. Beside the formidable enemies that he had to encounter abroad, he was distracted at home by dissensions among his generals. It was the object of the Austrians and Russians, who had before fought separately, to form a junction this campaign. Frederick's first purpose was, to prevent this junction, and to attack one division before they could be supported by another; but the disorders among the generals prevented them from acting with their usual skill and alacrity. The Prussians were defeated, on the 23d of June, at Kay, on the Oder, with the loss of more than four thou-

Losses of the king of Prussia.

^c His lordship's conduct on this occasion underwent an inquiry and a trial. He alleged in his defence, that contradictory orders had been sent. This allegation, however, was not made out to the satisfaction of the court; the issue was, that he was declared unfit for serving his majesty in a military capacity.

CHAP.
L.

1760.

sand men. This disaster disconcerted the king's measures, and was the prelude to a much greater defeat. The Austrians and Russians, soon after this battle, joined their forces, and encamped at Kundersdorf, near Franckfort on the Oder. On the 12th of August the king of Prussia attacked the enemy, and had almost succeeded in defeating the Russians, when the intervention of marshal Loudohn and the Austrian army gave a fatal turn to affairs. Notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts of the king, who exposed himself in the most dangerous parts of the field, had two horses shot under him, and his clothes rent by musket balls, the Prussians were completely defeated and dispersed; the approach of night saved their army from total ruin.^d The pressure of calamity served only to increase the elastic force of Frederick's genius. He recruited his army with indefatigable diligence, replaced his artillery from the arsenal of Berlin, and soon found himself at the head of a considerable body of troops. But the jealousies between the Russians and Austrians concurred with the active ability of Frederick. When Daun proposed to pursue the enemy, the Russian general would not consent; and the time was wasted without any important effort, until winter gave the Prussian monarch some respite for restoring his affairs,

French
invasion of
Germany.

In 1760, the court of Versailles made great preparations for recovering their footing in Westphalia. The hereditary prince, in April, having assailed the count de Germain too adventurously, was repulsed; but afterwards, on the 16th of July, attacked a numerous body of the enemy at Exdorf, and gained a brilliant victory; five battalions were taken prisoners, with their arms, baggage, and artillery.^e On the 31st of the same month, prince Ferdinand, with the main army, had an engagement with the French near Cassel, in which the enemy were compelled to retreat. The hereditary prince was afterwards

^d The king finding the defeat inevitable, sent a letter to the queen in these terms: "Remove from Berlin with the royal family; let the archives be carried to Potsdam: the town may make conditions with the enemy." Gillies.

^e Elliot's regiment of light horse appeared for the first time in the field upon this occasion; and, to the astonishment of the veteran troops, charged five different times, and broke through the enemy at every charge. See Belsham's History of Great Britain, vol. ii. p. 478.

defeated near Camper, but by a masterly retreat was able to rejoin the main army. The successes of that campaign towards the close were very various, but on the whole it was not favourable to the allies, as the French had again got possession of a great part of Westphalia, and the whole principality of Hesse.

CHAP.

I.

1760.

THE king of Prussia strained every nerve to compensate the losses of the preceding year, and so distributed his forces as to oppose the Russians, Swedes, and Austrians, in separate divisions; while the Russians, on the other hand, attempted to join the Austrians, in Silesia. Frederic used every art to animate and inspire his troops; he addressed himself to their superstition, credulity, and every other principle by which wise policy could operate upon vulgar minds: thus inspired, they took the field. The king found means to combine attack and defence. While protecting Silesia, he invested Dresden; but the approach of marshal Daun, obliged him to raise the siege of that city; and the enemy also took Glatz, in Silesia. The king found it necessary now to resort to Silesia in person, to maintain his interest in that long contested province; with his usual dexterity, he separated two divisions of the Austrian army, and kept such positions that it was impossible for them to surround his forces. He changed his movements and posts so often, that he kept the enemy always on the watch; and determined to attack them himself, as soon as he should, by marches and counter-marches, draw the one division to too great a distance from the other to receive from it any support. Before him was marshal Daun with one army; behind him, Loudohn with another; and he was informed by his spies, that a third army of Russians had crossed the Oder and joined Daun. Daun being reinforced by the Russians, on the evening of the 14th of August prepared to give the king of Prussia battle. Next day his majesty decamped at night with his army, and crossed the Oder towards general Loudohn. Frederic took possession of an advantageous ground, which he justly concluded Loudohn would wish to occupy. Loudohn advancing, and perceiving that there were troops posted there, supposed that it was but a small detachment, and that the main

 Masterly
policy of
Frederic.

 Operations
against
three ar-
mies of
Prussians
and Aus-
trians.

CHAP.

I

1760.
Defeats
Loudohn
with one
Austrian
army.

Induces
the Rus-
sians to re-
treat.

army of Prussia was in camp at Lignitz. Proceeding to dislodge the fancied detachment, he suddenly found himself attacked by the whole Prussian army. The darkness of the night, and the surprise, rendered the defeat inevitable and complete: 10,000 Austrians were slain, and 6000 taken prisoners. In the camp at Lignitz, Frederic had left some hussars, who imitated the noise of patrols and sentinels. Daun, not doubting that he should in the morning find the Prussians where they had been in the evening, marched towards the camp; but to his utter surprise, he found it entirely empty. The wind had been so boisterous and adverse, that Daun had not heard the report of two hundred pieces of cannon at half a mile's distance; and knew nothing of the enemy, till he saw them arrayed in order of battle on the opposite side of the river. Daun was evidently undetermined whether he ought to attack the enemy, or retreat. Frederic ordered his troops to fire, in demonstration of joy for victory; a dexterous manœuvre, which completely dispirited the Austrians, and precipitated their retreat. He dispersed the Russians by a stratagem not unlike that which Themistocles employed towards Xerxes. He sent a peasant with a letter to his brother Henry, telling him that he was advancing as fast as he could after his victory over the Austrians, to attack the Russians, and he hoped with equal success. The peasant purposely throwing himself in the way of the enemy was taken; the letter was found on him; and, on being read, they repassed the Oder, and destroyed the bridge; and thus, in order to avoid the pretended pursuit of Frederic, they cut off their own communication with the allied army. Frederic, meanwhile, instead of following them, endeavoured to make the best of his victory, by driving the Austrians out of Silesia. Daun, regretting that he had been so completely outgeneraled by Frederic, employed every means to prevail on the Russians to repass the Oder, and invade Brandenburg. He at last prevailed; and in October, the Prussians entered the electorate, and invested Berlin. The number of Prussians that had been left to guard the capital, was less than half that of the Austrians and Russians. The combined armies entered the capital, and

behaved with savage ferocity; but the king hastening from Silesia, the enemy on his approach thought it expedient to retire. Having delivered his country from the combined troops, he returned to oppose marshal Daun, threw him into a battle in a disadvantageous situation, and gained at Torgau a victory still more decisive than that which he had obtained over marshal Loudon. The Russians, on hearing of the defeat of their ally, retired into Poland; and thus Frederic became again superior to all his enemies. They might invade his country, take his towns, defeat his armies, exhaust many of his resources; but he had in his genius one resource, which they could not exhaust: with his transcendent abilities he ultimately predominated over all their force, experience, and skill. Such was the state of our principal ally in war, in October 1760.

CHAP.

I

1760.

Defeats a second Austrian army under Daun.

THE war gave occasion to discussions between Britain and Holland, which involved general questions concerning the rights and conduct of neutral states, when neighbouring powers are engaged in hostilities. By the barrier treaty it had been expressly declared, that no fortress, town, or territory of the Austrian Low Countries should be ceded or transferred to the crown of France on any pretext whatever. Notwithstanding this treaty, the states general had acquiesced in the surrender of Ostend and Nieuport to the French. They had also given permission for the free passage of warlike stores through their territories, for the use of the French army. A memorial, by order of the British king, was presented to the states. They answered, that they could not prevent the infractions of treaties. The Dutch for several years had been supplying the French with all sorts of warlike stores, and transporting the produce of the French sugar colonies to Europe, as carriers hired by the proprietors; and were at this time very active in carrying contraband goods to France. The supineness and inefficiency of the Newcastle administration had suffered such violations of neutrality to escape with impunity; but with the energy of Pitt, the case was changed. The court of Great Britain having complained of this violation of neutrality without obtaining redress, took the most effectual step for redress-

State of British allies, in October 1760.

Discussions between Britain and neutral powers, in October 1760:

with Holland.

CHAP.

I

1760.

ing themselves. They issued orders to arrest all ships of neutral powers, that should have French property on board. These necessary orders were strictly and vigorously executed. A number of Dutch ships with French cargoes were seized and confiscated; a great ferment arose among the Dutch: they remonstrated, and they complained. The British government assured them, that we were desirous of remaining in amity with them, but that we never could connive at such a deviation from neutrality; and that we should continue to capture ships caught in such acts of violation. Towards the close of 1758, they began to make some preparations for hostilities. The princess dowager of Orange, daughter of George II., by her judicious management prevented the two nations from a quarrel, which it was so much the interest of both to avoid. English privateers having frequently, without any authority, rifled Dutch ships, the masters were punished as pirates; but by our ships of war, authorized for the purpose, the aggressors of the law of nations continued to be captured. The princess dying, the conduct of the states threatened the dissolution of peace; and they persisted in supplying the French in the West Indies, and in the East had manifested a hostile disposition to the English interest. A second memorial was presented by sir Joseph Yorke. They endeavoured to justify themselves; but as the attempt was evasive and unsatisfactory, the British minister instructed the ambassador to reply in more peremptory terms. The Dutch, aware that Pitt never threatened in vain, promised^f to abstain from every kind of traffic that gave umbrage to Great Britain, and to inflict exemplary punishment on any of their subjects or servants who should give offence to England.

FERDINAND king of Spain died in 1759, and was succeeded by his brother Charles. This prince was very far from adopting the sentiments and policy of his predecessor respecting England. Hitherto, however, the difference did not manifest itself.

CHAP.

I

1760.
Negotiations for
peace before Oc-
tober, 1760.

DURING the contest which was carried on by Britain and her allies, overtures were made by George and Frederic to wards the termination of war. In the winter which followed the campaign 1759, immediately after the capture of Quebec and admiral Hawke's victory, Mr. Pitt, aware that the day of success is the time for offering peace, proposed that the allied kings should intimate their willingness to open a negotiation. Frederic consented, and a memorial was delivered to the French, Imperial, and Russian ambassadors, signifying that their Britannic and Prussian majesties were ready to send plenipotentiaries to any proper place that should be appointed, in order to receive overtures for a general peace. A preliminary article proposed was, that the dominions of the king of Prussia should be preserved entire. This proposal being communicated to the court of Versailles, France replied, that she had no other wish but to make peace with England; but that not being at war with Prussia, she could not confound the interests of that nation with those of Britain. France had been completely discomfited in every quarter in which England and she had to cope, apart from their mutual allies. She was entirely subdued in North America, the East and West Indies; and had been also defeated in Germany. The inferiority of her naval power obliged her to despair of success in any maritime efforts; but in Germany, though defeated, her case was by no means so desperate. From the exhausted state of the king of Prussia, and the enormous expenses of the war to England, she was in hopes that she and her allies might in that country obtain advantages, which would procure more favourable terms than she could expect from the events in those quarters in which she and England had been singly engaged. The preservation of the balance of power, by supporting the king of Prussia against the great confederacy, had been the principle object of the war in Germany. Had France ratified the proposed preliminary there would have remained little which she could set against the conditions that Britain was empowered by the victories to demand. She therefore determined at present to reject a proposal with such a preface. The empress queen, though hitherto frequently

Relative
state of the
belligerent
powers.

Negotiation broken
off.

CHAP. baffled, trusted to the resources of the combination, for the ultimate attainment of those objects which she sought by the war, and would by no means enter into a negotiation, the preliminary article of which was the abandonment of her views on the Prussian dominions. The overtures were rejected by both France and Austria, in the belief that at a future period they could procure conditions more compatible with the views with which they had respectively commenced their aggressions. Such was the state of Britain respecting war, negotiation, allies, and neutral powers, in October 1760. The condition of this country in her various relations had, from July 1757 to October 1760, in three years and a quarter, been raised from depression and disgrace to exaltation and glory. This change, under Divine Providence, had been principally effected by the force of genius, which overbore all private juntos and party distinctions, formed the wisest and most vigorous plans, selected the fittest instruments of execution, and by the combination of wisdom, firmness, and judicious choice, produced the most signal and important success. On two individuals, though of different ranks, yet who had each risen to a much higher elevation than that in which he was born, depended the fortune of Europe, and other quarters of the world. In their different situations, William Pitt and Frederic of Prussia overbore confederacy by intellectual preeminence and moral energy. An event now took place, in itself of great importance, and which led to the commencement of a reign, in all its history, connexions, and relations; in the events, changes, and vicissitudes, that it has witnessed; in the difficulties which it has had to encounter, and in the displays of HUMAN NATURE which it has exhibited, the most momentous that is recorded in the annals of mankind.

Sudden
death of
George II.

ON Saturday morning the 25th of October 1760, king George II. of Great Britain, then near seventy-seven years of age, being at Kensington palace, rose at his usual hour, called his page, drank his chocolate, and inquired about the wind, as he was anxious for the arrival of the mails; observing, that as it was a fine day, he proposed to walk in the garden. A few minutes after this declaration, his

General
state of af-
fairs in Oc-
tober 1760,

and result
of Mr.
Pitt's min-
istry in
that pe-
riod.

page, who had left the room, heard a noise, as of something falling. He returned hastily into the apartment with other attendants, and found the king weltering on the floor; being lifted on a bed, he in a faint voice desired they would call Amelia, but before the princess could reach his apartment, he breathed his last.

CHAP.

I.

1760.

GEORGE II., with abilities not exceeding mediocrity, possessed amiable and estimable qualities: he was just, open, sincere, brave, and though in his temper prone to anger, yet placable, and in his dispositions mild and humane. His government was equitable and constitutional as far as depended on himself, but varied in vigour and wisdom according to the characters of his ministers. The chief defects of his politics arose from his predilection for his native dominions, which involved Britain in alliances, subsidies, and hostilities, that, being unnecessary, were pernicious, in proportion to their magnitude. His preference of one party of his British subjects, during a great part of his reign, though neither very liberal nor wise, was the natural consequence of the circumstances in which he was placed operating, on his limited capacity. The last years of his life proved to him, that connexion with a certain confederacy was not necessary to the highest ministerial ability. In the first part of his reign, a minister of considerable talents, and in many respects beneficial to his country, established systematic corruption as an engine of executive government; and for many years this engine was believed indispensable. In the last period of his reign, a minister demonstrated, that corruption was not necessary to superior genius, magnanimity, and energy; but that talents and virtue, promptly, directly, and decisively exerted for patriotic purposes, overbore all opposition, and procured, with the applause of the people, every resource which was wanted for British security and glory. The pacific policy of sir Robert Walpole, and the persevering attention of Mr. Pelham, had a share in promoting the manufactures and commerce of this country; but their astonishing rise under this king, was chiefly owing to a more general cause of British greatness---the progressive spirit of industry and enterprise which freedom fosters.

His character.

National resources and prosperity.

CHAP.
I.
1740.
Literature.

From the same source, flowed literature and science ; and in the various departments of learning, Britain was eminently distinguished. Swift, Pope, and Bolingbroke, began the literary glory of George's reign ; Thomson graced its middle stage ; Johnson and Hume adorned its later periods. Having before rivalled, and at this time rivalling the ancients, in the various species and degrees of poetry and philosophy, Britain now for the first time contested the palm of history, and brought her Robertson and her Hume, to match the Livy and Herodotus, the Tacitus and Thucydides, of the Romans and Greeks. Theology, investigated by the inquiring and philosophical spirit of free and enlightened Englishmen, produced valuable accessions to theoretical and practical knowledge, in the works of Warburton, Hurd, Sherlock, Hoadley, and Secker. The dissenters also contributed a considerable share to the learning and piety of the times. While Foster, Watts, and Doddridge, inculcated religious conduct, by expounding and impressing in detail the doctrines of christianity ; the learned and logical Leland defended with force and success the whole christian religion against the attacks of the deists. Not rational piety only, however, mark the theological efforts of this period ; ingenious adventurers in fanaticism framed a new species of superstition, which both at that time and since has produced very important effects on the sentiments, character, and manners of numbers of people in all ranks. Whitefield and Wesley, having perceived that not a few of the established clergy had relaxed in the performance of their official duties, formed a project of supplying, in their own persons, this deficiency of spiritual instruction ; and, in order to establish sufficient influence, professed superior sanctity, and pretended divine illumination. Being both men of dexterity and address, they played successfully on the fancies and passions, and made a multitude of converts to their respective kinds of enthusiasm. They certainly were the means of rousing the clergy to a more vigorous discharge of their professional occupation ; and it is probable that they may have also made some of their votaries, by working on their fears and fancies, pious and amiable, whom reason and conscience might not have

influenced. : So far their efforts may have been salutary : but the first principle of their theory, divine illumination, superseding the necessity of human discipline and learning, has opened the way to many illiterate and ignorant undertakers, who, either circulating or stationary, have inculcated and impressed their absurd and often pernicious doctrines on the weak and the credulous ; so that frequently profligacy, and not rarely insanity and suicide, have flowed from such spiritual instructions. In the lighter species of composition, England showed that she could excel, as well as in the graver and deeper. If Spain and France could respectively boast of Cervantes and Le Sage, Britain could boast of Smollett and Fielding. But now there were not only, as in the time of Anne, a few illustrious in the different provinces of genius ; there were many respectable. The precepts, and much more the example, of the great writers of that age had diffused taste and the study of composition ; and many more had obtained a competent share of useful and elegant erudition, than at any former period of English history. In no age or country had learning been more widely spread, than in Britain in the year 1760.

In the fine arts, England was beginning to attain distinction. The encouragement bestowed on the sublime compositions of Handel, had stimulated the natives to musical effort. Hogarth showed that England could use the pencil as well as the pen ; and with the bold originality of genius, he pursued a path hitherto untrodden. Reynolds also laid the foundation of that fame, which he since raised to so great a height. In architecture, improvements were made by the taste and genius of a Burlington ; still, however, a relish continued for the ponderous structures of Vanburgh. Fine arts.

THE MANNERS of that age, though abounding in parade and form, were in many respects dignified and impressive. They certainly contained a much greater degree of pomp, and state, and ceremony, than was necessary for social parties in common life. Mingled with this stiffness and precision, there was, in conversation and in familiar writing, an indelicacy, less indeed than in the preceding age of George I., but still far short of just taste and moral Manners.

CHAR. I.
1730. refinement. This was probably encouraged by the practice of the court, to which modesty and reputation were not then necessary passports. The king's mistresses still continued to mix in all fashionable parties, and even to be companions to the princesses.^g

THE signal successes which adorned the last years of George II., the exaltation of England, and the depression of her enemies, raised his majesty to a degree of popularity which he had never before enjoyed. The warm fancies of his admirers represented him as equal in wisdom and heroism to any, or all, the princes that ever sat on the English throne; and we may safely concur with the historian of his reign,^h that no prince was ever more popular at the time of his decease.

GEORGE in his person was somewhat lower than the middle size, well formed, with prominent eyes, a high nose, good features, and a fair complexion. He was born in November, 1683, and in 1705 married princess Caroline of Anspach, by whom he had six children who came to maturity, besides several others who died young: two sons, Frederick born in 1707, who, on his father's accession to the throne, was prince of Wales, and William duke of Cumberland; and four daughters, the princess of Orange, princess Amelia, the princess of Hesse, and the queen of Denmark. Frederick married in 1736 the princess Augusta of Saxe-gotha. By her he had five sons and three daughters, who came to maturity: George born May 24th O. S. 1738, now our gracious sovereign; Edward late duke of York; William Henry duke of Gloucester; Henry Frederick late duke of Cumberland; Frederick William, deceased; Augusta duchess of Brunswick; Louisa, deceased; and Matilda, late queen of Denmark. His highness the prince of Wales dying in his father's lifetime in 1751, his eldest son George became prince of Wales, and heir of his grandfather's crown. As Frederick himself had not confined his preference to whigs, but desired to be king of Great Britain, and not of a party, he endeavoured to instil the same sentiments into his heir.

^g See lord Orford, *passim*.

^h See Smollett, vol. iv. p. 444.

THE tuition of prince George was committed to John Stuart earl of Bute, who was a nobleman of respectable talents and erudition, and particularly distinguished for decency and propriety of conduct. During the life of his grandfather, his highness had been brought up in a state of retirement, and was totally free from juvenile excesses. A warm, affectionate, and benevolent heart was unalloyed by vicious habits; on the other hand, a sound and acute understanding was not furnished with the actual experience and discernment into characters, which a more enlarged intercourse with mankind, in such a mind, must have produced. The filial, fraternal, and other affections of the prince were very strong. Those whom he loved, he loved fervently; in that number was his tutor, the earl of Bute; whom his judgment readily discovered to be a man of merit. It must be the coldness of experienced age, after frequent deceptions correcting its errors, not the generous credulity of unsuspecting youth, that will accurately scan the talents of those whom it loves. Even in age itself, wisdom is often lost in affection. It cannot therefore be surprising, that the attachment of a youth of twenty years of age should exaggerate the merits of its object. His highness's regard for the earl of Bute was very great; and his lordship being zealously attached to the church of England and his religious duties, studiously and successfully infused these principles and sentiments into the mind of his royal pupil. Being a man of irreproachable morals, he saw it necessary, from the state of the court and its influence on the public to instil such sentiments into the heir of the crown as might induce him to patronise decency and modesty, and give a change to the prevailing manners. The prince so educated, although he did not much appear in public, was, from the general report of his character, very popular. He was, besides, a native of England, and presumed to possess the sentiments of an Englishman—to be more attached to his own country, than to the foreign territories of his family. A face both elegant and manly, combining the blooming freshness of youth with firmness and vigour; a countenance expressing the open frankness, benevolence, and boldness of the English character; a stature above the middle size;

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I.

1780.
Education
of George
prince of
Wales.

Sentiments
and cha-
racter.

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a figure uniting strength and comeliness ; with unassuming and liberal manners ; cooperated with the general opinion of his head and heart, and his situation, in rendering him a favourite with the nation.

THE total discomfiture of the jacobite party in prince George's very early youth, by taking away the only plausible pretext for the exclusive encouragement of whigs, facilitated the road to a more liberal choice of counsellors. Thus the change of circumstances concurred with the sentiments of his parents and the education of the prince, in forming him to be king of a country, and not of a party.—Such was our present sovereign, in character and estimation, at the death of his grandfather.

CHAP. II.

Accession of George III.—State and resources of the country.—First Council of the king.—Prince Edward and lord Bute made privy counsellors.—Meeting of parliament.—His majesty's first speech.—Expresses his satisfaction at the cessation of party dissensions—his resolution to adhere to the engagements of his grandfather.—Is universally popular.—General principle of the young king in the choice of counsellors.—Unanimity of parliament, and liberal supplies.—The king recommends measures for securing the independence of the judges.—An act passed for that purpose.—Recompense bestowed on Mr. Arthur Onslow.—Parliament dissolved.—Partial changes in administration.—Lord Bute made secretary of state.—Campaign 1761.—British operations.—Attack and capture of Belleisle.—America.—East Indies; siege and reduction of Pondicherry.—Powerful army sent by France to Hesse Cassel.—Prince Ferdinand disconcerts their projects.—Military ability of the hereditary Prince.—Marquis of Granby.—King of Prussia acts chiefly on the defensive.—Baffles the attempts of his combined enemies.—Negotiations.—Proffered intervention of Spain indignantly rejected by Mr. Pitt.—He discovers the hostile compact of the House of Bourbon.—Bold and decisive scheme for compelling Spain to declare her intentions,—opposed by lord Bute, and overruled by a majority.—Mr. Pitt resigns his office.—Character of his administration.—Marriage of the king to the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz.—Lord Bute, chief director of affairs.—Prejudices against.—Event justifies the foresight of Mr. Pitt.—Hostile avowals of Spain.—Britain declares war against that kingdom.

NO sooner was the death of George II. known, than the prince of Wales was proclaimed king, with the

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Accession
of George
III.

title of George III. On his accession, all ranks of men ardently and sincerely testified their satisfaction. The whigs were attached to a prince of the house of Brunswick, and the tories rejoiced that they were to be governed by a sovereign free from party prejudices. Those who were neither whigs nor tories, were delighted with a king acquainted with our laws and constitution, a native of Britain, fond of his country, and who was expected to employ talents and virtue wherever they were to be found. All regarded their young king with affection, predicted, from his character, and the circumstances of the country, an auspicious reign, and were happy in the prospect afforded by his age and state of health that it would also be long.

THE resources of the country which his majesty was now called to govern, were increased beyond all former computation. War, which is so pernicious an obstacle to other mercantile nations, had opened new channels to the traders of Great Britain. The superiority of her marine force had crushed the navigation of France, her great rival in commerce. She now supplied, on her own terms, all those foreign markets, at which, in time of peace, she was undersold by that dangerous competitor. Revenue and national credit were proportionably great; the immense sums required for the manifold services of the war, were forthcoming on demand. The sum total granted for that year amounted to nearly sixteen millions sterling. The British army in various parts of the world consisted of ninety-seven regiments of foot, and thirty-one of horse and dragoons, amounting to about a hundred and ten thousand; the German auxiliaries in British pay, were sixty thousand; the ships of the line, including fifties, were a hundred and twenty-one; the frigates and sloops proportionably numerous; and the seamen in actual service amounted to seventy thousand. The ordnance establishment was in proportion to those of the army and navy. This force was commanded by officers selected by the penetration of the minister; who, in his choice of agents, considered merely the object of the respective trusts; and disregarding family connexion, or any other adventitious ground of preference, appointed instruments the most

fitted for effecting the destined purpose. The recent establishment of a national militia, answering most of the ends of internal defence, permitted the executive power to employ the regular troops, if necessary, out of the kingdom. Notwithstanding the expensive war, the means of internal security, as well as of influence and dignity at home and abroad, were under the command of the executive government, which employed so very energetic a minister as Mr. Secretary Pitt.

On the 27th of October the king held his first council, in which he declared his resolution to prosecute the just and necessary war in which his kingdom was engaged. His majesty's first proclamation, dated the 31st of October, was a strong and striking instance of his regard for the interests of religion and virtue. Its purport was, to encourage piety and morality, and to prevent and punish vice, profaneness, and immorality, which at that time were extremely prevalent. His majesty, two days after his accession, appointed his eldest brother prince Edward and John earl of Bute privy counsellors. Parliament, agreeably to an act made for the purpose, continued to exercise its office for six months after the decease of the king. On November the 18th it assembled; and the new king, seated on the throne, delivered a speech, well fitted to confirm the high opinion of the public. He expressed his concern for the loss which he and the nation had sustained by the death of his grandfather, especially at a season so critical to the country; and his sense of the weight and importance of the task now devolved upon him, being called to the government of this country at such a time and under such circumstances. He implored the divine assistance in his endeavours to discharge his duty, and proceeded in the following energetic strain:

"Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne; and I doubt not, but their steadiness in those principles will equal the firmness of my invariable resolution to adhere to, and strengthen, this excellent constitution, in church

The king's first proclamation,

First speech of his majesty to parliament.

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“and state, and to maintain toleration inviolable. The
 “civil and religious rights of my loving subjects are equally
 “dear to me with the valuable prerogatives of my crown;
 “and as the surest foundation of the whole, and the best
 “means to draw down the divine favour on my reign, it
 “is my fixed purpose to countenance and encourage the
 “practice of true religion and virtue.” He then men-
 tioned the successes of ourselves and our allies, the
 state of commerce, and the land and sea force in which
 he found the kingdom; after which he proceeded as fol-
 lows: “In this state I have found things at my accession
 “to the throne of my ancestors: happy in viewing the
 “prosperous part of it; happier still should I have been
 “had I found my kingdoms, whose true interest I have
 “entirely at heart, in full peace: but since the ambition,
 “injurious encroachments, and dangerous designs of my
 “enemies, rendered the war both just and necessary, and
 “the generous overture made last winter towards a con-
 “gress for a pacification has not yet produced any suit-
 “able return, I am determined, with your cheerful and
 “powerful assistance, to prosecute this war with vigour,
 “in order to attain to that desirable object, a safe and
 “honourable peace. For this purpose, it is absolutely
 “incumbent on us to be early prepared; and I rely upon
 “your zeal and hearty concurrence to support the king of
 “Prussia, and the rest of my allies, and to make ample
 “provision for carrying on the war, as the only means to
 “bring our enemies to equitable terms of accommoda-
 “tion.” After addressing the house of commons on the
 supplies, he concluded his speech in the following words:
 “The eyes of all Europe are upon you; from your reso-
 “lutions the protestant interest hopes for protection, as
 “well as all our friends for the preservation of their inde-
 “pendency; and our enemies fear the final disappoint-
 “ment of their ambitious and destructive views. Let
 “these hopes and fears be confirmed and augmented by
 “the vigour, unanimity, and despatch, of our proceed-
 “ings. In this expectation I am the more encouraged
 “by a pleasing circumstance, which I look upon as
 “one of the most auspicious omens of my reign. That
 “happy extinction of divisions, and that union and good

“harmony which continue to prevail amongst my subjects afford me the most agreeable prospects. The natural disposition and wish of my heart are to cement and promote them ; and I promise myself that nothing will arise on your part, to interrupt or disturb a situation so essential to the trade and lasting felicity of this great people.”

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THIS speech was extremely satisfactory both to parliament and to the public. Very loyal addresses were returned by both houses ; but that of the house of commons was peculiarly forcible and eloquent. From the promotion of Pitt to be prime minister, there had been no parliamentary opposition. Unanimity in both houses marked the first session of the reign of George III., and the most liberal supplies were granted without a dissenting voice. The sums required for the public services of 1761 amounted to nineteen millions, twelve of which it was necessary to raise by a loan, and add to the debt which his majesty found at his accession. The civil list was fixed at 800,000*l*. A message from the throne stated the extraordinary expenses incurred by several provinces of America in their exertions during the war, and parliament, as a compensation, voted 200,000*l*.

gives general satisfaction.

Suspension of parties and unanimity of parliament. Liberal supplies.

ON the third of March 1761, his majesty, in his speech from the throne, recommended a measure displaying the liberality and patriotism of his character. By the death of the king, all officers appointed by him are vacated, and require new commissions. Of these were the offices of judges. In very early times, our kings in person often heard and decided causes ; but ever since the reign of Edward I. and the establishment of the different courts and of regular circuits, they have delegated that power to the several judges. For a long period these held their places during pleasure ; consequently, the administration of justice must have depended very often on the views, interests, or passions of the reigning prince. In the reign of William III. a more stable tenure of office was proposed and established, and it was enacted,ⁱ that the commissions of the judges should be made, not as formerly, during pleasure, but during the faithful discharge of their

1761. The king recommends to parliament to render the judges independent of the crown ;

ⁱ Statutes at large, 13 W. III. cap. 2.

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duties; and their salaries were ascertained and established, so that it might be lawful to remove them, on the address of both houses of parliament.^k Notwithstanding this wise provision, the office of the judges determined on the demise of the crown. With praiseworthy earnestness for the impartial administration of public justice, his majesty signified, that he considered the independency and uprightness of the judges, as essential to the proper exercise of their office, as one of the best securities for the rights and liberties of his subjects, and as most conducive to the honour of his crown. He therefore recommended to the consideration of parliament, that such farther provision might be made for securing the judges in the enjoyment of their offices during their good behaviour, notwithstanding the demise of the crown, as should be most expedient. Parliament expressed a strong sense of the wisdom and liberality of this measure, and an act was passed to the effect recommended in the speech.^l

act to that
purpose.

THE parliament was now approaching to its dissolution. Mr. Arthur Onslow had been speaker for thirty-three years in five successive parliaments. He now declared, that his age and infirmities would prevent his return to the house; and on this declaration it was immediately moved, and unanimously carried, "that the thanks of the house should be given to Mr. Speaker, for his long and faithful services; for the unshaken integrity of his conduct; for his steady impartiality in the exercise of his office; and his unwearied endeavours to promote the real interests of his king and country, to maintain the honour and dignity of parliament, and to preserve inviolable the rights and privileges of the commons of Great Britain." The house farther unanimously addressed the king, beseeching him to confer some testimony of his royal favour on Mr. Onslow. His majesty, in answer,

^k See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 267.

^l Mr. Belsham labours to diminish the merit of this proposal of his majesty; by which, for the general good of his people, he showed his disposition to lessen the influence of the crown. He asserts, that this was no sacrifice on the part of the crown, as no minister would advise such a dismissal. This, however, is a mere assumption of Mr. Belsham's. A minister might advise the refusal of new commissions to judges obnoxious to him, as good judges might be to a bad minister; and a new king, before the act of 1761, had the power of such dismissal: that power is, in the act desired by his majesty, entirely renounced.

expressed his high esteem for the gentleman recommended, and bestowed on him a pension of 3000*l.* a year for his own life and that of his son. On the 19th of March, his majesty, having expressed his complete approbation of the conduct of parliament, prorogued it; and in April, it was dissolved.

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Pensions bestowed on Mr. Arthur Onslow. Dissolution of parliament,

ABOUT this time some partial changes were made in administration. Mr. Legge was dismissed from his office of chancellor of the exchequer,^m and viscount Barrington appointed in his place; lord Holderness resigned his office of secretary of state, and was succeeded by lord Bute. Mr. Pitt still continued principal secretary, and consequently at the head of administration, as he must have been of any political body of which he was a member.

Lord Bute appointed secretary of state.

THE chief military enterprise undertaken by Britain in the campaign 1761, was the attack of Belleisle, a large island lying off the south coast of Brittany. This place was about twelve leagues in circumference, strongly fortified, and afforded to its possessors the command of a great extent of French coast. It was apprehended, that it might be of service to the English trade and shipping in time of peace; and, as a receptacle for privateers, might annoy the trade of France in time of war; or that the French, when a treaty should be set on foot, aware of its advantages,

The campaign opens. Expedition to Belleisle.

in Mr. Belsham, in the account that he gives of this change, imputes to his sovereign mean and unworthy motives. According to this writer, his majesty had, at the preceding election, (being then prince of Wales,) sent a peremptory message to Mr. Legge, who was about to be chosen member for Hampshire, pressing him to relinquish his pretensions in favour of sir Simon Stuart, a near relation to the earl of Bute. "Mr. Legge (says Mr. Belsham) represented, in very respectful language, his earnest desire to gratify the wishes of his royal highness, if timely intimation had been given him of his intention; but, as things were now circumstanced, he could not, in honour to himself or justice to his friends, recede from the nomination already made. This (continues Mr. Belsham) was a species of contumacy altogether unpardonable; and the new monarch took a very early and a decisive opportunity to demonstrate to the world, how different was his system of thinking from that of Lewis XII. who, with a magnanimity truly royal, declared it beneath the dignity of a king to revenge the quarrels of a duke of Orleans." Belsham, vol. i. p. 17. This paragraph contains an assertion injurious to our sovereign, without any proof or vouchers. Where is the evidence that the prince sent such a message? There is none in Mr. Belsham's history; but even if the prince had sent such a message, is there any proof, that, because Mr. Legge did not do what was not practicable, the prince should conceive such resentment against him, as on that account to deprive him of his office seven years after? Where is the testimony that supports this assertion, imputing to the sovereign, malignity and revenge? Is it a construction founded on general experience of that illustrious personage's dispositions? Are malice and rancour supposed, even by his enemies, to be component parts of the king's character? An impartial historian, will admit no assertion that is unsupported by testimony, and contrary to probability.

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might offer in exchange for it some other valuable possession; and under these ideas, an expedition was ordered. The land forces were commanded by general Hodgson, and the fleet by commodore Keppel, brother to the earl of Albemarle. On the 29th of March they sailed from Spithead, and on the 7th of April arrived off Belleisle. On the 8th, they attempted a landing where its beach was most accessible; but, after several brave and repeated efforts, were obliged to desist, with the loss of near five hundred men. Not dispirited, however, by this repulse, they determined to make another trial, as soon as less boisterous weather should permit; but this was not the case till the 25th of April. On that day they made a second attempt, and not where the coast was weakest, but strongest; they proceeded on the same principle, the application of which had carried the heights of Abraham, and they placed their chief hopes in the difficulty of the precipices; and concluded that the enemy, trusting to that circumstance, would be off their guard. To conceal their main attempt, they amused the enemy by two feigned attacks in different quarters. By these means, brigadier Lambert effected a landing, and gained possession of a hill overhanging the sea; formed his men, and repulsed a body of French, which had been sent to dislodge him from his post. Having now the command of this part of the shore, the British troops in a short time made good their landing, and immediately commenced the siege with great vigour: while the fortress, on the other hand, was very gallantly defended, and several bloody contests took place. At last the chevalier St. Croix, debarred by the British fleet from any communication with the continent, and pressed on all sides, surrendered, by an honourable capitulation, on the 7th of June, two months after the arrival of the British armament. Although in England all men did not equally estimate the value of the conquest, yet they agreed in praising the military and naval exertions by which it had been obtained.

Siege of
the fort,and cap-
ture.Transac-
tions in
America
unimpor-
tant.

IN America so much had been already done, that little remained now to be accomplished by war. The Cherokee Indians had been troublesome and incursive on our western frontiers, but were entirely defeated by colonel Grant, and

compelled to make peace on our own terms. In the West Indies, a small armament, under lord Rollo and sir James Douglas, sailed against Dominica, one of the neutral islands, but occupied by the French, and reduced it under the dominion of Great Britain.

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In the East Indies, as we have seen, Pondicherry only remained in possession of the French. Against this beautiful town and important fortress, in the progress of success, the British troops proceeded. Colonel Coote invested it by land, and admiral Stevens by sea. In November 1760, the batteries and works raised by the besiegers suffered great damage from a violent storm, but were quickly repaired, and the operations were carried on with vigour and perseverance. The besieged made a resolute and gallant defence, expecting the arrival of a powerful fleet to their relief; but at length being attacked by famine, they were reduced to extreme distress, and obliged to subsist on the flesh of camels, of elephants, and even of dogs. On the 1st of January 1761, a violent storm dispersed the British fleet, and gave the besieged sanguine hopes of provision and succour. The British admiral, however, exerted such diligence and celerity, that in four days after the storm, he again appeared before the place, with eleven ships of the line and one frigate, two of the line having been wrecked. Being disappointed, after such flattering hopes of assistance, the besieged became desperate; but neither they nor their general made any offer to surrender. At length a breach being effected, and only one day's provision of any kind remaining, a signal from the town was made for a suspension of arms. A jesuit and two civilians offered to capitulate; but the governor would propose no terms, and sent out a paper full of invectives against the English, as breakers of the treaties relative to India. As the governor would not capitulate, and the offer of the inhabitants without his concurrence could not be regarded, the city was taken by storm, and abandoned to the plunder of the victors. Colonel Coote and his coadjutor, by their courage, conduct, unanimity, and perseverance, effected this conquest on the 15th of January 1761, and thus gave a final blow to the French power in the Carnatic.

Operations in India.

The British besiege Pondicherry.

Gallant defence.

Taken by storm.

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II.1761.
Affairs in
Bengal.Projects of
Law,discomfited by the
English.Campaign
of the allies
in Ger-
many.

IN Bengal, an attempt was made to revive the power of France. On the taking of Chandernagore in 1757, Mr. Law,ⁿ a subject of France, had, with a party of French fugitives, retired into the north western regions of India, and his European followers soon amounted to about two hundred men. The great mogul had a short time before been deposed by an irruption of Mahrattas, and soon after dying, one of his sons, Shah Taddah, assumed the title of his father, supported by some of his provinces, and opposed by others. Law offered this young prince his service with his two hundred Europeans, which was accepted with great joy; and, though the prince's opponents were extremely numerous, yet, by the superiority of European genius, enterprise, and military skill, to those of the feeble Asiatics, he easily turned the scale in his favour, and reduced several considerable districts to obedience. Law, elated with this success, in an evil hour persuaded him to turn his arms against Bengal; and he accordingly entered that kingdom with eighty thousand men of his own, and upwards of two hundred French. The Subah of Bengal marched to oppose him with twenty thousand natives, but a much more formidable force in five hundred English. The British and their allies gained a complete victory over the French and their auxiliaries: Mr. Law was taken prisoner, and his fellow adventurers killed, taken, or dispersed; the great mogul being among the native prisoners. This victory happened on the same day on which Pondicherry was taken, and thus by both was a final blow given to the power of France in India.

WE left the French in possession of the whole territory of Hesse, and a considerable part of Westphalia. Their force in Germany greatly surpassed that of prince Ferdinand, and rendered it necessary for him to act with cautious circumspection. The general object of the allies was the same in this as in the preceding campaigns; namely, to drive the French out of Germany: but the scene of their efforts was different. The French army was powerful, and well supplied with provisions. Prince Ferdinand, in forming his plan of operations, considered

ⁿ Nephew to Law, so noted about 1720, for his Mississippi scheme.

the different characters of the contending troops. The French, though equally brave, he knew, were not equally hardy with his own soldiers; he therefore projected a winter campaign, in which the hardiness of his own troops, inured to the country and climate, would somewhat compensate for the superior force of the enemy. Accordingly, on the ninth of February, he prepared to attack the enemy on every side, while they were totally off their guard; and on February the 10th, began his march. The centre, led by his serene highness in person, penetrated directly into Hesse, and made its way towards Cassel: the right and left of the army were each at a very considerable distance from this body; but so disposed as fully to cooperate in the general plan, which was very extensive. The hereditary prince, who commanded on the right, marched by Stadbergen and Mengerlinghausen; and leaving the country of Hesse to the eastward, as the alarm was to be as sudden and as widely diffused as possible, he pushed forward with the utmost expedition into the heart of the French quarters. General Sporken commanded a corps of troops to the left, and penetrated into Thuringia. These movements cut off the French from communication with a strong garrison which they had placed at Gottingen, and with the army of the empire in Lower Saxony; and at the same time opened a communication between the army of the allies and of Prussia. On the approach of the allies, the French, notwithstanding their numbers, fled in great consternation; and had not the country, by its defiles and difficulties, favoured their retreat, they might have been entirely destroyed. Prince Ferdinand attacked Fruster, a well-fortified town on the river Eder, one of the streams which fall into the Weser.^a He found the place well prepared; but, though at first repulsed, he in a few days compelled it to surrender, and there got possession of a large magazine. That gallant and enterprising officer the marquis of Granby,^p who had succeeded lord George Sackville in the command of the English, attacked and stormed several strong forts and castles in

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II

1761.

Objects
and plan of
prince
Ferdinand:

He reduces
Fruster.

Achievements of
lord
Granby.

^a Not directly, but after its confluence with the Fulda.

^p Grandfather of the present duke of Rutland.

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Siege of
Cassel,

raised.

Broglie re-
inforced,
and ena-
bled to act
on the
offensive.Repulsed
by Granby.

the neighbourhood, and the chief magazines of the enemy were either taken or destroyed. Marburg, upon the river Laun which falls into Rhine, and Leighayn, were blockaded. But the chief object of the prince was the siege of Cassel, on which the fortune of the campaign must evidently turn; since, if the strongly fortified capital of Hesse were taken, the inferior places would certainly fall. Meanwhile marshal Broglie, the French commander, collected his dispersed troops, and, being reinforced from France, returned to meet the victorious enemy. The allied army had been divided, in carrying on the different operations; and the hereditary prince having advanced a considerable way before his uncle, was attacked by Broglie, and defeated. Prince Ferdinand, finding it necessary to raise the siege and evacuate Hesse, made a very able retreat towards Hanover; and though disappointed in the hopes that he entertained from his winter campaign, yet his expedition was far from being without effect; for, by seizing and destroying the magazines of the enemy, he prevented them from availing themselves of their successes. Both armies returned to winter quarters, and it was the end of June before they again took the field. Marshal Broglie, being strongly reinforced, marched from Cassel, and moved towards the Dimet,^a to join a body of troops in Westphalia under the prince de Soubise. General Sporken, who occupied a strong position on the banks of the same river, on the approach of the grand army of the enemy, attempted a retreat, but did not effect his purpose without his rear being attacked, and suffering considerable loss. Marshal Broglie having joined Soubise, marched forward against the allied army, which prince Ferdinand had posted on the Lippe, on the eastern frontiers of Westphalia and the confines of Lower Saxony. Discovering that the design of the enemy was to attack him, the prince took a very strong position, and also employed effectual measures for securing a retreat, should it be necessary. Broglie, on the 15th of July, made a furious attack upon the marquis of Granby's posts, and after

^a A river on the confines of Westphalia and Hesse, which falls into the Weser.

a violent conflict was repulsed; but the next day the French made a general attack. Prince Ferdinand, though with very inferior numbers, by his skilful disposition, and his readiness in seizing advantages which were afforded him on one side by the tardiness of the French, was victorious; but the victory was not decisive. Broglio thought it expedient to separate the troops, and sent Soubise westward to besiege Munster, while he himself proceeded towards Hanover and Brunswick; and so secured his communication, that he could easily retreat into Hesse, should that be expedient. Prince Ferdinand, moving eastward to watch the motions of Broglio, sent the hereditary prince to protect Munster; which purpose he effected so completely, as to prevent Soubise from besieging that city, and compel him to retire. Meanwhile Broglio was making rapid advances in Lower Saxony: on the 5th of October he attacked the city of Wolfenbottle, which after a siege of five days he took, and proceeded to Brunswick. The hereditary prince, however, being sent by his uncle to the relief of his father's capital, by the skill and activity of his movements compelled the enemy to raise the siege, and also to evacuate Wolfenbottle: soon after, both armies retired into winter quarters. After all the variety of operations and vicissitudes of fortune, both the French and the allies were nearly in the same situation as at the commencement of the campaign.

Various
success.

Results of
the cam-
paign in
western
Germany.

THE king of Prussia in this campaign, contrary to the plan which he had adopted in the former years of the war, and notwithstanding the glorious actions and important achievements of the preceding season, resolved to act upon the defensive. Aware, however, that this resolution would encourage his enemies, he skilfully concealed it, by threatening operations which he did not mean to carry into execution. The plan of his enemies was, that Loudohn, assisted by the Russians, should undertake a war of sieges in Silesia; that Romanzow should carry on the war on the side of Prussia and Pomerania, and, assisted by the Russian and Swedish fleets, besiege Kolberg; while marshal Daun commanded an army in Saxony, which was to serve as a magazine for reinforcing the other armies, and co-operating either with Loudohn or Broglio, or causing a diver-

In the east
the king of
Prussia
acts on the
defensive.

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sion in favour of Romanzow. After a long siege, the Russians and Swedes captured Kolberg. The king himself undertook the defence of Silesia against the Russians and Austrians; and the chief display of his military skill was in the encampment that he formed, which defied the attack and prevented the progress of the enemy during the greater part of the campaign.^r In September he destroyed the Russian magazines; and, had not his own provisions failed, would have prevented any important blow from being struck in Silesia; but on the 29th of September, being obliged to leave his strong post, general Loudon attacked and surprised Schweidnitz, which closed the campaign in Silesia. By this loss, added to the capture of Kolberg, the campaign of 1761 was on the whole disastrous to Prussia.

Negotiations for peace.

THE British minister was now engaged in a business which in its consequence gave occasion to very great changes in the state: this was a negotiation for peace. In winter 1760, France began to see that her hopes from successes in Germany were by no means likely to be realized; that Britain, invigorated by Pitt, continued with unrelaxed efforts to support her allies on the continent; and that Frederick still baffled, and was likely to baffle, all the force of his enemies. Her revenue, which had principally supported the expense of the war, was exhausted by enormous expenses, and her ambition was humbled by discomfiture and disaster which had made the war so general. Expressing her wishes for peace, therefore, she now seemed to be in earnest. Her allies were aware, that if she withdrew from the confederacy, it would be unsafe for them to continue hostilities. Sweden, the subsidiary of France, was informed by the court of Versailles, that the state of the French finances did not permit the longer continuance of the subsidy; and the courts of Petersburg, Vienna, Sweden, and Poland, concurred in overtures for a negotiation. On the 25th of March 1761, declarations to that effect were signed by the ministers of the five powers at Paris, and on the 31st of the same month delivered at London. A declaration of the same import, by the

^r See Gillies's *Frederic*, p. 353.

kings of Britain and Prussia, was dated on the 3d of April; and Augsburg was by both parties fixed on as the most commodious situation for a congress. As the number of the parties concerned, and the variety and complication of their interests, must render the negotiation intricate, it was unanimously agreed by the parties, that neutral powers should be admitted to the convention. To simplify as much as possible the views and objects of the different parties, it was found most expedient to recur to the origin of the war, in which their respective purposes had been first manifested, and by the events of which they had since been jointly or severally affected. Many as were the relations and consequences which the war in its progress involved, yet, on tracing them to their sources, they were found to originate in two objects totally unconnected; namely, the limits of the French and English territories in North America, and of the dominions of the king of Prussia in Germany and Poland. It was agreed, that the adjustment of German differences should be the business of the general congress at Augsburg; and that a separate negotiation should be opened at London and Paris, for the arrangement of such concerns as belonged exclusively to Great Britain and France.

To this negotiation, as pertaining more immediately and directly to our subject, we shall pay the first and principal attention. Ministers were reciprocally sent; Mr. Stanley to Paris on the part of England, M. Bussy to London on the part of France; and the negotiation now appeared to be in the fairest train. France, which had proposed the separate treaty with England, thereby offered a dereliction of any hopes that she might have derived from the state of affairs in Germany. It was now obvious, that, in order to obtain peace, she must make very humiliating concessions. Her proper quarrel was, by this arrangement, separated from the general cause; and she must expect very disadvantageous conditions, as in her proper quarrel she had suffered grievous disasters. When in such a situation she desired a separate peace, it might have been very naturally imagined that she was sincere; and not only by superficial politicians, but by men of information and experience, she was really conceived to be in

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interest of
the parties.

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between
Britain and
France.

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earnest. France was, however, playing a game artful in its design, but shallow in its policy. The court of Spain; she hoped, would not look with indifference on the humiliation of the principal branch of the house of Bourbon. Charles, she well knew, was originally far from being so favourably disposed to England, as his predecessor had been. The great successes of the English, on an element and in quarters in which they might be eventually dangerous to Spain, had added jealousy to original displeasure. The more advantageous and imperious the terms demanded by Britain should be, the more would the resentment and jealousy of Spain be inflamed, and the more easily would that power be induced to take a part in the war. On the side of England there was sincerity in the negotiation, but there were circumstances which obstructed a peace. France was a country whose ambition had always displayed itself toward her neighbours, and more especially towards Britain, whenever she had power to give it effect: in the present contest, she had been evidently the aggressor. Our ambitious rival having commenced an unjust war, and being totally vanquished, and almost prostrate at our feet; this was conceived to be the time for reducing her to a state which would long disable her for future aggression. Such was the general opinion of the people, and such also was the opinion of the principal minister.

Principle
of the
overtures.

THE negotiation however opened, on the ground of *uti possidetis*; that is, that the two parties should remain in possession of reciprocal conquest, and that whatever cessions were made, should be granted for an equivalent. As no cessation of arms had hitherto taken place, and as the war might make a daily alteration in the fortune of the contracting powers, it was necessary to fix upon some epoch to which this possessory article should refer. The French proposed, that the situation in which they should stand on the first of May 1761 in Europe, on the first of July in the West Indies and Africa, and on the first of September in the East Indies, should be the basis of the treaty proposed to be negotiated between the two powers; but they declared their willingness to fix upon other epochs, if these proved not to be agreeable. The British

minister, at first, refused to admit any epochs, but those that referred to the day of signing the treaty of peace. To this the French replied, that unless a certain period of the war was fixed, it would be impossible to ascertain the nature and value of the possessions which might be relinquished; and they declared that, unless specified epochs were fixed, the negotiations must be at an end. The English minister at length saw the propriety of the measure, but before he would treat definitively on that point, he proposed two preliminary conditions: first, that every thing adjusted between the two crowns concerning their particular war, should be made final and conclusive, independent of the fate of the negotiation at Augsburg: secondly, that the definitive treaty of peace between Britain and France, or preliminary articles to that effect, should be signed and ratified between the date of that memorial and the first of the following August. If these conditions were accepted, Britain agreed to name as determined epochs, the first of July for Europe, the first of September for Africa and America, and the first of November for the East Indies. France, having consulted with her principal ally, consented to the independence of the treaty on the negotiation at Augsburg, *provided nothing should be stipulated to the prejudice of the house of Austria*. To the second article, and to the proposed epochs, she also agreed. The general principle, and the terms of its application, being ascertained, they came next to particular stipulations. The great objects in the negotiation were six: 1st, the limits of the two crowns in North America: 2d, the conquests of Great Britain in the West Indies, together with the neutral islands there: 3d, our conquests in Africa and India: 4th, the adjustment of the particular affairs between the English and French in Germany: 5th, the conduct which the two crowns were to adopt, with regard to their respective allies in Germany: 6th, the restitution of the captures made by England previous to the declaration of war. France proposed to cede Canada; stipulating, that whatever French colonists should so choose, might remove with their effects, and that those who remained should be allowed the free and public

Proposi-
tions of
France.

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exercise of the catholic religion.¹ She required the restitution of cape Breton, and a confirmation of the privilege of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland. In the West Indies—of the neutral islands, she proposed to relinquish Tobago to England; but that Dominico, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. should return to her protection as before; and to repurchase Guadaloupe and Marigalante, she offered Minorta. In Africa, she required the restoration of either Senegal or Gooes; and in Europe, of Belleisle: as a compensation for which, she offered to evacuate Germany eastward of the Maine. In the East Indies, being stripped of all her possessions, she had nothing to offer. She endeavoured to prove, that the territorial acquisitions of England would hurt the commercial interests of the English as well as the French East India company; and proposed, that the peace in India should be on the same footing as the convention concluded some years before between M. Godeheu and admiral Saunders, in totally different circumstances; and that the cession of her conquests in Germany, should be a compensation for those in Africa and India. The chief difficulty was in the fifth object; for England declared that she would inviolably preserve her faith to the king of Prussia; and France had recently stipulated at the court of Vienna, that she would admit nothing in the treaty with England to the disadvantage of Austria. To solve this difficulty, France proposed; that the French and British armies in Germany should observe a strict neutrality; that when his Britannic majesty should recal his forces, the christian king would recal double the number; and that no French troops should remain in Germany, but in proportion to those who continued there in British pay. The French also demanded the restitution of the captures made before the declaration of war. These proposals were, in July 1764, sent in a memorial to London. Mr. Pitt's answer, dated July 29th, agreed to receive Canada, but without any limitation; and, in addition to the French offer of all Canada, demanded its appurtenances. It rejected the requisition of cape Breton, or any other island in the gulf

Reply of
England.

¹ Annual Register for 1761, p. 58; and Magazines for ditto.

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of St. Laurence : it allowed the privilege of fishing, if the French would demolish Dunkirk : it acceded to the propositions respecting the West Indies, and to restore Belleisle on the compensations offered : it refused the neutrality proposed in Germany ; and insisted, in addition to the evacuation of Hesse, that France should evacuate all Germany : it refused the restitution of either Senegal or Goree : it rejected the treaty of admiral Saunders as the basis of peace in India, but proposed that the East India companies of the two nations should negotiate on this subject ; and lastly, it refused the restoration of the captured ships.

WHILE these matters were depending, M. Bussy, the French agent, delivered a private memorial from France, proposing, with the consent and communication of the king of Spain, that his catholic majesty should be invited to accede to the treaty, to prevent any disputes between the crowns of Great Britain and Spain from producing a new war : specifying the points required by Spain to be, first, the restitution of some captures made upon the Spanish flag ; secondly, the privilege of the Spanish nation to fish on the banks of Newfoundland ; and, thirdly, the demolition of the English settlements made on the Spanish territories in the bay of Honduras. The sagacity of Pitt immediately penetrated the object of the proposed interference, and readily comprehended, not only the insincerity of the French in the proffered negotiation, but also the motives of their duplicity. He expressed himself rather, as might be expected, from conscious wisdom discovering an attempt to impose on it by trick and artifice, than in the complaisant style of court and diplomatic etiquette. He rejected with the strongest and most unqualified expressions of contempt, the proposals of an enemy, humbled at our feet, to interfere in disputes with a nation with which we were in friendship ; and called on the Spanish minister, to disavow a memorial asserted to have been drawn up by the consent of his court. That ambassador returned at first a verbal message, and soon after was authorized by his court to deliver a written answer, in which he openly avowed and justified the step taken by the French agent, as entirely agreeable to the

Proposed
interference
of
Spain in
the negoti-
ation,

rejected by
Mr. Pitt

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sentiments of his master. He declared, that the kings of France and Spain were united, not only by the ties of blood, but by mutual interest. He applauded the humanity and greatness of mind, which his most christian majesty had shown in the proposition complained of by Pitt; insisted much on the sincere desire of peace, as the only motive which influenced the conduct of the two monarchs; and added haughtily, that if his master had been governed by any other principles, "his catholic majesty, giving full scope to his greatness, would have spoken from himself, and as became his dignity."

THE whole of this paper not only indicated, but avowed; an union of interests and views between the courts of France and Spain, which, if the negotiation should be broken off, as it was likely to be on the rejection of the proposed interference, must produce hostilities. In the negotiation between France and England, there were two great points on which the parties could not agree. France continued to insist upon the neutrality of Germany, which was refused by England, and also on the restitution of the captures previous to the declaration of war. The faith of the country being pledged to the king of Prussia, the English administration considered the repeated proposals for neutrality, as attacks upon national integrity. Mr. Stanley was ordered to deliver the ultimatum of the court of London, requiring the cession of Canada and its dependencies, Cape Breton, and other islands in the gulf of St. Lawrence, as demanded in Mr. Pitt's memorial of the 29th of July; agreeing to the territorial restitution in Europe and the West Indies, on the conditions proposed; requiring the cessions in Africa therein mentioned, and also the evacuation of Ostend and Nieuport; and the restitution of Cleves, Wesel, Gualdrea, and all the territories belonging to the king of Prussia and other allies of Britain. England insisted, that she should be left at full liberty to support the cause of the king of Prussia, according to the terms of existing treaties: she proposed to admit France to a share of the Newfoundland fishery, and to give her the small island of St. Pierre; but she continued determined to refuse the restitution of the ships captured before

3 State-papers relative to a rupture with Spain, 1764.

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Negotia-
tion breaks
off.

Mr. Pitt
conceives
Spain hos-
tile.

that ~~the~~ Britain would neither agree to the proposed neutrality in Germany, nor to the restitution of prizes; France insisted on these two points, and thus the negotiation was set aside, and Messrs. Buisy and Stanley were ordered to return to their respective countries.

Our ambassador at the court of Madrid was instructed to require a categorical and satisfactory declaration concerning her final intentions. If he perceived on the side of Spain any intention of disavowing, or even of explaining away, the offensive transaction, he was ordered to accept it, and to afford to her an opportunity of plausible denial. He accordingly made the desired representation to general Wall, the Spanish minister, and received many professions of the friendship entertained by Spain for the English king and nation, but a very evasive account of the purport of the proposed interference; the minister merely saying, that nothing was intended by it that could be inconsistent with the dignity of his Britannic majesty. He magnified the matters in dispute between Spain and Britain, and added either trivial or groundless subjects of complaint. Subsequent conferences were evasive and unsatisfactory, and consequently by no means answered the requisitions made by the British minister. The French interest was evidently gaining ground in the Spanish court. France strongly pressed upon Spain the dangerous greatness of England, which would render her now so formidable a neighbour to Spanish America, and enable her, if not checked, to engross so much commerce. The christian king earnestly solicited his catholic majesty to form a family compact, which should include an offensive and defensive alliance, a reciprocation of benefits, and a mutual guarantee from dangers and attacks. Charles agreed to the propositions of Lewis; a convention was formed for these purposes, and signed August 15th, to which the other branches of the house of Bourbon were invited to accede. The conclusion of this treaty, afterwards so famous under the title of the family compact, was speedily discovered^a by Mr. Pitt, and confirmed his

^a The informant of the British minister is generally understood to have been the earl mareschal of Scotland; who having been attainted, had long resided in Spain, but was now reconciled to the British government.

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Proposes
to strike
the first
blow.

opinion of the hostile intentions of Spain. Considering war with that kingdom to be on these grounds inevitable, Mr. Pitt proposed in council, that we should strike the first blow, attack Spain before she was fully prepared, and thereby give her a lesson how she should presume, unasked, to interfere in our affairs, with a mediation at once dictatorial, insolent, and menacing. He proposed, that we should consider the answer of Spain, as a refusal of satisfaction; and that refusal, as a declaration of war. Conceiving that hostilities were unavoidable, he proposed that we should carry them on with the utmost speed and vigour. We were paramount at sea; let us send a fleet immediately to intercept their galleons, and thus at once strike a blow that should weaken them for the remainder of the contest. In the projects of united genius and magnanimity, there is often a grandeur, which transcends the comprehension of ordinary minds, and appeals rather than inspires the requisite efforts. Bold in conception, prompt in plan, decisive and rapid in execution, Mr. Secretary Pitt said, Spain has hostile intentions, let us anticipate her efforts, let us disable her power; so shall we speedily compel her to sue for peace and prevent ourselves from being disturbed by her unjust partiality. It is evident, that we must have war; the sooner we begin, the better for us, as we are prepared, and she is not: her chief resources are on the element which we command, we may therefore arrest their progress to her ports. His colleagues, though men of sense and information, were not endowed with those powers which at one glance can view a great and complicated subject in all its parts, diversities, and connexions. They considered Mr. Pitt's proposal as tending to precipitate us into a war which might be avoided, and argued on the impolicy of a rupture with Spain. That nation, they admitted, had taken a very extraordinary and unjustifiably step; but his catholic majesty had probably been seduced by the artifices of France, and a temperate but spirited remonstrances from the British court might recal him to a true sense of his interests. The addition of another war would diminish our national strength; and the proposed seizure of the fleet would alarm all neutral nations. This was the opinion of all the members of the

Outvoted
in council.

council, except lord Temple; but as it did not overturn Mr. Pitt's reasonings, his opinion remained unaltered. The amount was, war is an evil; war with Spain is contrary to the interests of England; and negotiation is a more desirable mode of settling disputes, than hostilities. These general propositions Mr. Pitt neither did nor could deny; negotiation, he admitted, was preferable to war, if it could be employed, but it had been tried without effect. Spain was resolved to violate the peace; it was therefore just in England to prevent her attempts, and her interest to strike the first blow. As that branch of Bourbon showed a disposition to join in the enmity of the other, now was the time for humbling the whole house; and if the opportunity were suffered to escape, it might never be recovered.* We are now taught by the event, that this illustrious statesman explored the views of both actual and intentional enemies; for Spain proved hostile, as he predicted. It is also evident, that in such circumstances the plan which he proposed, was as wise as it was vigorous. If immediately executed, it would have disabled the enemy, and prevented the necessity and expence of our subsequent efforts. The succeeding part of his conduct is more liable to exception. He said, that if he could not prevail in this proposition, he was resolved to sit no longer in that council. He thanked the ministers of the late king^y for their support. He was himself called to the ministry by the voice of the people; to them he considered himself as accountable for his conduct; and he would not remain in a situation that made him responsible for measures which he was no longer allowed to guide.^z It was very obvious, that in ability Mr. Pitt far surpassed any of his colleagues; and if it be expedient for the nation that in council superior wisdom should guide inferior, it was certainly expedient that such men as the duke of Newcastle and the earl of Bute should be governed by Mr. Pitt. Perhaps however, wisdom can best exercise guidance, where she does not assert a claim that implies conscious superiority.*

x Annual Register, 1761, p. 43. y The earl of Bute was said to have frequently thwarted Mr. Pitt in the cabinet, but had been hitherto overborne by his superior abilities. z Annual Register 1761, p. 43.

a Since writing the above, I observed, that lord Orford, in a letter to general Conway, expressed the same opinion: "He (Mr. Pitt) and lord Temple have de-

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He resigns.

The king expresses his regret :

bestows on him a pension.

HAD this extraordinary statesman condescended to employ a softer and more conciliating mode of conduct, he perhaps might have won over a majority of his colleagues to his opinion ; but the experiment was not tried. Being outvoted in the council, he resigned his employment into the hands of his sovereign. His majesty declared his concern for the loss of so very able a servant, but without requesting him to resume his office. He offered him any reward in the power of the crown to bestow ; at the same time he expressed himself satisfied with the opinion of the majority of his council ; and even declared, that, had the council concurred with Mr. Pitt, he should have found it difficult how to have acted, in the light in which he had viewed the subject. The king did not conceive Spain to have exhibited any clear proofs of hostile intentions ; and, entertaining such a view, he could neither think it just nor prudent to commence a war.^b Having therefore with the greatest condescension explained his sentiments (sentiments that, in the light in which he regarded the matters in question, do him the greatest honour), Mr. Pitt was extremely affected by the united dignity and goodness of his sovereign. The following day, a pension of three thousand pounds a year was settled on Mr. Pitt for three lives, and at the same time a title was conferred upon his lady and her issue. This pension subjected the acceptor to much frivolous and contemptible obloquy. Mr. Pitt's original fortune was small ; the situation into which he had been advanced by his abilities, required great expenditure ; his powerful mind engaging him in momentous politics, and grasping the interests of his country and other nations, he had bestowed too little attention on his own pecuniary affairs, so that he was very far from being in affluent circumstances : he had, during a most arduous conjuncture, served his country in the highest station that he could

dared against the whole cabinet council. Why, that they have done before now, and yet have acted with them again : it is very true ; but a little word has escaped Mr. Pitt, which never entered into his former declaration ; nay, nor into Cromwell's nor Hugh Capet's, nor Julius Caesar's, nor any reformers of modern or ancient times. He has happened to say, he will guide. Now, though the cabinet council are mighty willing to be guided when they cannot help it, yet they wish to have appearances saved : they cannot be fond of being told that they are to be guided ; still less, that other people should be told so." Lord Orford's letters.

^b Annual Register 1761, p. 44.

occupy; and having found her in a state of unexampled humiliation, he left her in a state of unexampled exaltation. Such a man deserved reward. All the ribaldrous invective poured out against his acceptance of this annuity, may be answered in a few words; AS A SUPPLY, IT WAS WANTED; AS A RECOMPENSE, IT WAS FAIRLY EARNED.

MR. PITT's resignation of an employment in which his continuance would have promoted the most momentous interests of his country, cannot easily be justified. From his wisdom, his country might have expected that he would have overlooked an opposition of opinion in a case which very fairly admitted of two constructions, though he was eventually proved to be right; that his patriotism would have induced him to have employed his talents, even though every particular measure adopted might not be agreeable to his views; and that his magnanimity would overlook what he might suppose personal competitions. But, whatever sentiments were entertained respecting Mr. Pitt's going out of office, every impartial man agreed, that a greater minister had never acted under a sovereign of England. Lofty in genius, profound in wisdom, and expansive in views; inventive in counsel, bold in resolution, and decisive in conduct; he long overbore party by unequalled ability. Sagacious in the discovery of general and official character, he discerned the fittest instruments for the execution of his plans; and employing none in offices of high political, naval, or military trust, but those whom he knew to be thoroughly qualified for effecting the purpose, he laid a sure foundation for success. The enterprises under his administration were brilliant, and the result was at once advantageous and glorious. A mind of such force of intellectual and moral qualities, energy of operation, and perseverance of exertion, which had in its powers and endowments no motives for artifice or disguise, perhaps bestowed too little care to conceal from others that superiority which it so transcendently possessed. A little more indulgence for common understandings, and somewhat less of austerity of temper and of inflexibility of disposition, might have preserved this illustrious man to the councils of his country.

Character
of Mr.
Pitt's ad-
ministra-
tion.

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 Marriage
 of the king
 to the prin-
 cess Char-
 lotte of
 Mecklen-
 burg Str-
 elitz.

THIS summer a very pleasing and important event took place, in the marriage of the king. The nation, from the accession of his majesty, was very desirous, both on public and private considerations, to see him united to a consort capable of rendering him happy. Various conjectures were formed, who the lady should be that was to become the queen of Great Britain. Different princesses were mentioned; and an English woman was by many supposed likely to attain that high rank. Pamphlets were written for and against the king of Great Britain allying himself with a subject; but, on the 8th of July, a gazette extraordinary put an end to all conjectures. This paper announced that his majesty had declared his resolution of demanding in marriage the princess Charlotte, sister to the reigning duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz; a princess distinguished for talents and amiable qualifications. It was directed by his majesty, that lord Harcourt should repair to the court of Strelitz, to demand her serene highness; that the duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton should be sent to accompany her, and lord Anson, with a fleet, to receive her in the Elbe, and conduct her to England. On the 14th of August, the noble embassy arrived at Strelitz; and the next day, lord Harcourt asked the princess for his sovereign. The proposal being accepted, a contract was signed. On the 17th, her highness set out; and on the 23d, she reached Cuxhaven, where the English squadron lay, and was received with every demonstration of joy by the fleet. After encountering very tempestuous weather, and being driven a considerable way to the northward, on the 6th of September, the squadron arrived safe at Harwich late in the evening, and the next day the princess landed on British ground. Returning with the most distinguished affability the attentions that were paid to her at Harwich and the intermediate places, she captivated the affections of all the spectators. That night she slept at Wilham, the seat of lord Abercorn; and on the 8th of September, proceeded towards London, when she was met at Rumford by the king's coach and servants. On their approach to the metropolis, to avoid the streets they turned aside toward the Islington road, from thence drove to Paddington, passed through Hyde Park, and coming down Constitution hill,

stopped at the garden gate of St. James's palace, where she was received by all the royal family. The duke of York handed her from the coach. In the garden she was met by his majesty, who saluted her with the greatest affection, and led her to the palace, where she dined with the king, the princess dowager and the rest of the family. At eight in the evening the marriage ceremony was performed by Dr. Secker, archbishop of Canterbury. The duke of Cumberland gave the princess away; the princess became queen Charlotte, and London and Westminster were the scenes of festivity and joy.

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ABOUT a fortnight after, the coronation of the king and queen was solemnized with a magnificence and grandeur befitting those illustrious personages, and the country over which they reigned. The deportment of the young queen on these great occasions, at public places, and wherever she appeared, charmed all spectators; and, when added to the accounts given by those who had an opportunity of knowing the understanding and heart of her majesty, made every loyal Briton rejoice at the happy lot of his beloved monarch.

Corona-
tion.

ON the resignation of Mr. Pitt, the earl of Egremont was appointed to his department; but, as the earl of Bute was now considered as the chief director of affairs, and not long after, by the dismissal of the duke of Newcastle, became first lord of the treasury, we may from this time date the commencement of the Bute administration. John Stuart, earl of Bute, whose respectable private character has been already mentioned, was the representative of a noble family of considerable eminence in the southwest of Scotland, and connected with the first nobility in that part of the kingdom; especially with the house of Argyle, so distinguished for its efforts in support of our present establishment; and he had uniformly taken the side of the Hanover family.^b His lordship was a man of talents somewhat exceeding mediocrity, with a considerable share

The earl of
Bute.

^bI mention this circumstance, in opposition to a notion once prevalent, that lord Bute had been tainted with jacobitism; a charge totally devoid of proof, and which really appears to have had no other foundation than his name of Stuart. Indeed his appointment by George III. to be tutor to the heir of the crown, when ~~his~~ principles were exclusively paramount, is a sufficient answer to any assertion resting on such a feeble basis.

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I.

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of that species of literature and knowledge which is within the reach of moderate abilities. He was a good classical scholar, conversant in natural history, botany, some branches of chemistry, and experimental philosophy; a liberal patron of letters, and a magnificent promoter of useful experiments and discoveries.^c Pious in his sentiments and habits, he was meritorious in domestic and social relations; and, as a private nobleman or gentleman, a very valuable member of society. Such a character constantly contemplated by a prince so well disposed as his royal pupil, when joined to the pains and attention bestowed upon himself, naturally produced respect and affection; and affection in the inexperience of youth, as naturally exaggerated the merits of its object.

His majesty's object in the choice of ministers.

THE king evidently meant to choose his servants, WITHOUT RESPECT TO THEIR PARTY CONNEXIONS, according to his estimation of their fitness for the offices of state. He had good reason to entertain a favourable opinion of lord Bute, from what he himself had seen and known; and it was a very natural process of reasoning, especially when mingled with youthful affection, to suppose him qualified for higher departments. There certainly was a man of much greater talents than lord Bute, but he had relinquished his employment. It would, perhaps, be difficult to show that there was any other statesman at that time but Mr. Pitt (except Mr. Fox, who was a supporter of the existing administration,) in point of genius, much elevated above lord Bute. The earl of Chesterfield had retired from public affairs; earl Granville was too much advanced in years for so active a situation; Mr. George Grenville was one of lord Bute's colleagues; neither Mr. Charles Townshend nor lord North were hitherto known. The ministerial abilities of the duke of Newcastle had been already ascertained so completely, as to afford little encouragement for again trusting him with the chief conduct of affairs. During the administration of Mr. Pitt, he had frequently attempted to

^c Various expensive works were printed at his cost for the dissemination of curious and useful knowledge. Indeed, there never perhaps was a nobleman in greater favour with *printers*, as I am assured by very respectable members of that body.

thwart that great man, in which he had been joined by others of the old whig confederacy ; but as often as he made the attempt, he had been overruled. After Mr. Pitt had left the council, his grace fondly hoped that he should again recover the leading influence which he once possessed. He did not perceive that it must be a prejudice, which could attach the qualifications of a statesman, to descent from several families, or connexion with a certain confederacy ; and that there had been circumstances which favoured such a prejudice, which now no longer existed. A power and influence founded upon accidental circumstances not personal qualities, he expected would remain, after those circumstances were changed. It is, no doubt, proper, in the mixed constitution of this country, that men of high rank and fortune should have a share in the administration ; but the precise place which, consistent with sound policy, they are to hold, and the influence which they are to possess in the executive councils of the nation, must be supreme or subordinate, according to their respective talents, combined with the situation of affairs. In point of rank and property, the administration of lord Bute, supported as it was by the house of Bedford and many other great families, was not wanting. It did not possess the highest talents : that was a want which the acceptance of the duke of Newcastle for its head, would not have enabled it to supply. It must be a bigoted prejudice in favour of the whig connexion, that could wish to have reinstated the ministry which presided at the beginning of the war. As a state puppet moved by the ability of Pitt, the duke, from his numerous connexions, was of great use ; but, as himself a leader of administration, he had already demonstrated his unfitness. Much as has been said, it has never been proved, that an administration, unless headed by Mr. Pitt, could have been formed at that time composed of greater ability. The astonishing powers, however, of the favourite statesman, discredited with the public the administration of his successor, as it must have discredited any administration that could have been formed. Besides this comparison, the change of policy in the present king, which would not employ men merely because they were whigs, and belong-

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1.

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ed to certain great families, was misconstrued or misrepresented, as a predilection for principles contrary to those which had supported his family. The minister was represented as the abettor of arbitrary power; as holding an office through the partiality of his master's affection, to which he was not entitled by his abilities, nor fitted by his principles. This idea of his arbitrary notions of government was farther increased, from the place of his origin and his name. He was a native of Scotland, in which there had been many jacobites, whence he was supposed to be a jacobite himself, and, as a Stuart, attached to the exiled family, at least to their political doctrines. In examining real facts, the historian finds no documents or evidence to support this charge of arbitrary principles. In the series of his ministerial conduct, there is certainly, on the one hand, nothing to excite very great admiration, and to justify the fulsome panegyrics of some writers of the time; nor, on the other, to justify the censures, invectives, and obloquy of a much more numerous class, which comprehended abler individuals.

THE negotiation with France being broken off, the court of Versailles published, what it termed an historical memorial of the war, containing the pacific overtures, and the causes of their inefficacy. The object of this memorial, as might naturally be expected, was to throw the whole blame of the war and its continuance on Great Britain. It included also personal invectives against the conduct of Mr. Pitt, whom the enemies of this country regarded with bitter resentment. The French now circulated with great industry a report, that Spain, in consequence of a treaty recently concluded, would immediately declare war against Britain. The new ministry of England instructed the ambassador at the court of Spain to demand, in moderate but firm terms, a communication of this treaty; at least a disavowal that it contained any part that would affect the interests of Britain. Before these orders arrived, his lordship had received authentic information of the actual conclusion of this alliance, and applied to the Spanish ministry for satisfaction. The fleet of Spain was safe in the harbour, and in other respects that country was better prepared. Mr. Wall now throwing off

Hostile a-
vowal of
Spain.

the mask, justified the sagacity of Mr. Pitt. He gave no direct answer, but entered into a long complaint of the treatment received by Spain from Britain during the administration of Mr. Pitt, and also of the terms proposed by the court of France. It was not proper, he said, for his catholic majesty to suffer a relation, a friend, and an ally, to be in danger of compulsorily yielding to any terms which an insulting conqueror chose to prescribe; he added, that the conditions offered by France were reasonable; that, in not accepting such terms, Britain manifested an ambitious design to ruin the power of France, which, if not opposed, must ultimately crush the power of Spain; and that, in proposing to dispossess France of her American possessions, the British intention must be to proceed next to the American dominions of Spain. The impartial reader must see, that the amount of this declaration expressed in plain language was, if Britain will not make peace with France on the terms which France offers, she must make war with Spain. The British ambassador replied with cool indifference to the invectives, and with temperate firmness to the menaces; recalled the Spanish minister to the object for which he had desired the conference, and repeated the question. Wall again evaded; but at last said, that the king of Spain had thought proper to renew his family compacts; and there the conversation ended. The earl of Bristol immediately communicated to his court this change in the Spanish procedure.^c It was not doubted, either at home or abroad, that the knowledge of the resignation of Mr. Pitt had contributed to the assumption of such a style. The earl of Bute and his colleagues, apprehensive that their cautious measures to avoid war might be imputed to fear, in their next step showed that, though they did not wish, they did not dread a war with Spain. They instructed the ambassador to renew his demand respecting the treaty with the former union of moderation and firmness, and to signify that a refusal to communicate the compact, or to disavow an intention of taking part with France, would be considered as an aggression on the part of Spain, and

^c Papers relative to the rupture with Spain, 1761.

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Manifesto
of Spain.Family
compact.

an absolute declaration of war. On the 10th of December, the earl of Bristol made the demand, when the required satisfaction was refused; he announced his instructions to leave Spain, and the Spanish ambassador at London received similar orders from his court. Before his departure from London, the count de Fuentes, minister of the Spanish king, delivered to the earl of Egremont, secretary of state, a manifesto in the form of a note, setting forth the haughtiness and boundless ambition of the British nation, and of its late minister Mr. Pitt, as experienced by Spain; and the insulting manner in which the British minister had answered the proffered and friendly interference of Spain.^d Respecting the family compact,^e it was the mode and not the substance of the requisition that had prevented compliance on the part of his catholic majesty. The king had now ordered him to declare, that the treaty in question contained only a reciprocal guarantee of the dominions of the several branches of the house of Bourbon; but with this particular restriction, that it should only extend to the dominions remaining to France after the present war. It thence proceeded to declare, that Spain had been entirely in the right, and Britain in the wrong: and this manifesto was professedly addressed, not to the king of England only, but also to the English nation.

THE earl of Egremont's answer to this production afforded a very favourable specimen of the official ability of the ministry and council by which it was composed. It stated the irregularity and indecency of appealing to the English nation, in a discussion between the two sovereigns. It reprobated personal invective, as inconsistent with the dignity of the princes concerned, and irrelevant to the subjects at issue. It confined itself to facts, and recited those with an accurate reference to their respective dates and documents, specifying exactly the instances of hostile conduct which Spain had exhibited; and from these demonstrated the progress and increase of her hos-

^d Mr. Pitt's answer was, that he should not relax from the terms that he proposed, until the Tower of London was taken sword in hand.

^e See State Papers 1761; family compact.

tile intentions, with our temperate and, often repeated endeavours for reconciliation; showing at last, that her procedure amounted to an actual declaration of war.

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II.

1761.

THE Spanish ambassador having departed at the end of December, war was declared against Spain on the 4th of January 1762.

CHAP. III.

Lord Bute unpopular.—Meeting of new parliament.—Debates on the war in Germany.—Resignation of the duke of Newcastle.—France and Spain declare war against Portugal.—Campaign.—Capture of Martinico.—Expedition to the Havannah.—Policy of the undertaking.—Strength of the place.—Arduous siege.—Reduction.—Manilla taken.—Capture of the Hermione.—Birth of the Prince of Wales.—Campaign in Portugal—in Germany.—Revolution in Russia; and effects of it on the confederacy.—Proposals for peace.—Duke of Bedford sent to France.—Peace of Paris.—Approved by majorities in parliament.—Severely censured by Mr. Pitt, the minority, and out of the houses.—Impartial view of its merits.—Great clamour against lord Bute.—Cider-tax.—Popular ferment.—Inflamed by anti-ministerial writings.—Unexpected resignation of lord Bute.

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III

1762.

Lord Bute
unpopular.

THE resignation of Mr. Pitt in circumstances of such danger, did not pass without censure from impartial men and profound admirers of his illustrious character, and, when combined with his acceptance of a pension, was the subject of gross and illiberal abuse, in publications known to or supposed to be favoured by his successor. If these writings were really patronized by lord Bute, they produced an effect quite different from his intentions, being imputed, by a great majority of the nation, to an invidious desire of degrading to his own level a character, whose soaring sublimity he could little hope to reach. Lord Bute became daily more unpopular, from his apprehended attempts to injure the popularity of a man so much his superior; and both himself and his supporters were extremely disagreeable to the English nation.

Meeting of
the new
parliament,

THE first parliament of the present king assembled on the 6th of November 1761, and sir John Cust was chosen speaker of the house of commons. His majesty's

speech commenced, with noticing the happiness which accrued to himself, and the joy of his country, from his marriage with so amiable and accomplished a princess. He wished that this first period of his reign had been marked with another felicity in the return of peace ; but, though overtures had been made both for a general pacification and a separate peace between France and England, and a negotiation had been opened, yet it had not produced the desired effect. He observed, that to him the continuance of the war could not justly be attributed ; adverted to the principal events of the preceding campaign, and stated the necessity of vigorous efforts, which would require proportionate supplies ; and added, that by powerful exertions only they could expect a safe and honourable peace. Addresses were returned, corresponding with the tenor of the speech, and the supplies granted for the year were, 18,299,153*l.* 18*s.* 11 1-2*d.* of which 12,000,000*l.* were raised by a loan. Seventy thousand seamen were voted ; of land forces, either British or in British pay, 170,000 : 100,000*l.* a year was settled on the queen as a jointure, in the event of her surviving his majesty ;^f with the palaces of Richmond old park for a country seat, and Somerset house for a town residence.

IN the house of commons, the ablest champion of the minister was Mr. Fox ; a gentleman who, with very vigorous talents and great political experience, had repeatedly underrated his own abilities, when he condescended to act an inferior part to such men as either the duke of Newcastle or the earl of Bute ; to both of whom he was far superior in the qualifications of a statesman. In the present session he had not to encounter any regular opposition. Mr. Pitt poured forth his energetic eloquence to invigorate government : but did not attack any of their measures, or impugn any of their propositions, unless they compelled him to vindicate his own policy. In the course of the session, the expediency of the German war underwent a considerable discussion. The origin of

Debate on
the war in
Germany.

^f It has been said, either from misapprehension or wilful misrepresentation, that the queen, ever since her marriage, has had an independent income of 100,000*l.* a year. This report is totally unfounded, as a perusal of the act of parliament will show.

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that war was strongly reprobated; the expense in which it involved the country was painted in glowing colours; and its events were asserted to be not only unproductive, but pernicious to Britain. Our principal ally (it was asserted) was totally regardless of our interests; he minded nothing but his own aggrandizement: and, though pretending to be the supporter of the protestant religion, was, as his writings and conversations demonstrated, altogether indifferent about every religion, and had invaded and laid waste Saxony, a protestant country.

On the other side it was answered, that the war in Germany was necessary for preserving the balance of power; that it exhausted the French in supporting their allies, much more than it exhausted us in supporting ours; that the money expended and the force employed by France in Germany, had weakened her efforts in other quarters of the world, and had greatly contributed to our extraordinary successes. That respecting our ally, whatever might be his private sentiments concerning religion, he had most vigorously and effectually defended the protestant cause in Germany; that his invasion of Saxony was justified by the hostile designs of the Saxon prince; that the papers found in the palace of Dresden were authentic proofs of what he had himself before learned, that the attack upon Saxony was necessary to his own preservation; and, to sum up all, that our honour was pledged to support our allies, as well as our interest engaged to preserve the balance of Europe.

THE former arguments were used by some strenuous friends of the Bute administration; the latter by Mr. Pitt, and his supporters. For the present, however, it was deemed necessary to persevere in the German war, and the sum of one million was voted for that purpose. No bill of sufficient importance to deserve particular mention in history, was passed or proposed in this session, which closed on the 2d of June.

CONSIDERABLE disunion at this time prevailed in the cabinet. The duke of Newcastle, adhering to the political notions in which he had been trained, was desirous that the government should be carried on by the whig confederacy. Lord Bute was averse to the

renewal of this system of party monopoly, which Mr. Pitt had so effectually overborne. Newcastle, still nominally prime minister, could not bear the preponderating influence of lord Bute in the cabinet. Besides personal competition and disagreement in general politics, they differed on a particular measure; namely, the mode of carrying on the German war, and the subsidy to be afforded to the king of Prussia. The duke proposed two millions, and, being thwarted by lord Bute, was still further incensed. He accordingly resigned; the earl of Bute became first lord of the treasury, and Mr. Grenville secretary of state: thence nominally commenced the ministry of Bute, which had really begun at the resignation of Pitt.

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1762.

SPAIN in a short time declared war against England, and the situation of Great Britain was at this time extremely critical. She was engaged, directly or indirectly, in war with all the great continental powers; and, what was more important, against the chief part of the maritime strength of Europe. The navy of Spain consisted of one hundred men of war; and though the navy of France was reduced, it was not so entirely destroyed as not to make a considerable addition to the Spanish force. From the new alliance, powerful in its real strength, and in its principles so gratifying to the national attachment towards the house of Bourbon, despondency was succeeded by sanguine hope and animation in the minds of that volatile people. They flattered themselves that they should now be able to obtain that superiority over Britain which they had so eagerly sought, and in pursuit of which they had met with such repeated disappointments and dreadful losses. Companies and individuals, at their own expense, fitted out ships of war; and private zeal animated public efforts. The confederates were farther encouraged by the departure from the British councils of the most formidable and dreadful foe to the enemies of England; they expected that the measures of the new ministry would be feeble and inefficient, and that the country, which had cheerfully borne the expenses required to execute the great plans of Pitt, would, when deprived of its favourite minister, feel the heavy burdens arising from the war. All

Spain declares war
against
Britain.

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these circumstances tended to inspire with confidence France and her new ally.

To balance these disadvantages, Britain had the uniform success, which had made the people believe themselves invincible. She had the hope of plunder arising from a Spanish war, which had always rendered it popular, and called forth the most vigorous efforts both private and public. She had hitherto the command of that element, over which a great part of the Spanish resources must be transported. Though devoid of such a minister as Pitt, she had an administration, whom the knowledge of his character and conduct, his fame and popularity, and the low estimation in which they themselves were held, stimulated to strenuous exertions, in order to approve themselves not unworthy of their office; and who had also the advantage of his plans and counsels, which they had before opposed.

Applica-
tion of
France
and Spain
to Portu-
gal.

FRANCE and Spain, knowing the natural connexion between Portugal and England, and the momentous advantages accruing to this country from her commercial intercourse with the dominions of his faithful majesty, and from the Portuguese docks and harbours in time of war, determined to compel the court of Lisbon to renounce all friendship with Britain, and to violate the neutrality. On the 6th of March, the Bourbon ministers delivered a joint memorial, representing Britain as assuming a despotic authority at sea, which was equally dangerous to Portugal as to other powers, and urged the necessity of joining in an offensive and defensive alliance against England. They exhorted the king to dismiss the British from his court, to exclude thenceforward from his ports all the men of war and merchant ships of that country, and to join his forces to those of France and Spain. His catholic majesty, from the great affection which he and his brother of France entertained for the king of Portugal, in order to secure that prince from danger, spontaneously offered and insisted on sending Spanish troops, to garrison all the principal harbours of the most faithful king.

Answer.

HIS Portuguese majesty declared, that his country and resources were totally incapable of supporting a war; that, although sensible of the good intentions and benefi-

cent offers of their christian and catholic majesties, and desirous of gratifying their wishes, it was impossible for him to comply; and of this they themselves must be convinced, on fully reflecting upon the circumstances. He was closely connected with Britain, as well as with France and Spain; and between Portugal and Britain there were ancient and uninterrupted alliances. Britain had given him no offence; he could not therefore go to war with his Britannic majesty, without violating the honour of his crown, the law of nations, and every principle of justice. In this situation he had determined to observe a strict neutrality in a war between three friends and neighbours whom he so highly regarded, and to confine himself only to such preparations as were merely necessary for self-defence.

IN reply to this answer, the Bourbon sovereigns, on the first of April, delivered at the court of Lisbon a second memorial, more imperious, insolent, and unjust, than the first. It set forth, that, from the relative situation of Portugal and England, the alliance between them was in effect an offensive treaty against the house of Bourbon. It stated, that a British fleet^g had, in 1750, attacked a French squadron in a Portuguese harbour, which justified a declaration of war by his faithful majesty, unless suitable satisfaction were obtained; and if so, the ships taken ought to have been restored to his most christian majesty, the failure of which restitution would justify the French monarch in declaring war against the king of Portugal: but still it was the earnest desire of the French and Spanish sovereigns to be on terms of the strictest friendship with his most faithful majesty, to open his eyes to his real interest, and to induce him to join them against the common enemy. The king of Portugal, far from being convinced by the reasoning or moved by the exhortations of this memorial, refused more peremptorily than before to comply with the requisition, and supported his refusal by the strongest argument. On the 23d of April, a third memorial was delivered, still more unjust in its demands, and more insulting in its language, and which

^g Under admiral Boscawen. See p. 135.

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The Bour-
bon prin-
ces declare
war against
Portugal.

Campaign.
British ex-
pedition
against
Martinico;

concluded with announcing orders to their ambassadors to leave the court of Lisbon. In his reply to this ultimatum, the king of Portugal proved, that the Bourbon princes, in their imperious attempts to force a neutral nation to war, and in their declaration of hostilities because their endeavour was unsuccessful, had violated the rights of an independent nation. Such was the origin and cause of the war made upon Portugal by the house of Bourbon; and a more unjust or ungrounded procedure is not to be found in the annals of modern Europe known at that time, not even in those of the French themselves.^h The Portuguese declaration of war was issued on the 23d of May; the proclamation of Spain against Portugal on the 16th of June, and of France on the 20th.

BEFORE the resignation of Mr. Pitt, an expedition had been projected against Martinico, the centre of French trade; and the war being finished in North America, we were enabled to draw from thence a considerable part of the army. General Monckton commanded the land forces, and admiral Rodney the fleet. Being reinforced by some troops stationed in the British West Indies, the army consisted of twelve thousand men, and the fleet of eighteen ships of the line. On the 7th of January, the English armament arrived before the island of Martinico, and on the 16th they effected their landing at Cas Navire without any loss; but they had still considerable difficulties to encounter. The island was populous and opulent, and supported by a numerous well armed and well disciplined militia, peculiarly qualified for the species of war which the country permitted, and provided with a considerable body of regular troops. In many places the island was intersected by ravines and deep streams, narrowed into defiles, or involved in woods: where it was more open and practicable, batteries were posted with all the skill of French engineers, who had been, ever since the first attempt in 1759, strength-

^h In this opinion I concur with Mr. Belsham, and we both have the honour of agreeing with the renowned Frederic. "Wherefore," said he, "did France and Spain attack the king of Portugal, who had given them no offence, and over whom they had no right of control? Their object was, the destruction of the profitable English commerce with Portugal, and the attainment of better terms from England in return for their cessions of the conquests which they expected to make in Portugal. But is it a reason for attacking a sovereign, that there exists no lawful reason? *Q* law of nations, how vain and useless is thy study!"

ening the place, in expectation that our successes would induce us to assail so valuable a settlement. These works were most complete in the neighbourhood of Fort Royal, a strong town which defended the approach to St. Pierre the capital, and must be conquered before we proceeded against that city. Two lofty and steep eminences, called Morne Tortenson and Morne Garnier, protected by deep ravines, overlooked and commanded the fortifications. These heights were occupied by the enemy; which, while they were retained, secured, or being lost, as certainly lost the city and citadel. The sea was upon the right, the country on the left, and the eminences immediately before them, of which Morne Tortenson, being the nearest, must, from its position, be first attacked. On the right, a body of regular troops and marines was ordered to advance along the beach towards the town, which lay in the lower grounds beyond the eminences. A thousand sailors, in flatbottomed boats, rowed close to assist that division: on the left, the light infantry, covered by artillery, were employed to turn the enemy on that side; while the centre, consisting of the grenadiers, and supported by the seamen dragging along the cannon, attacked the enemy's centre, being covered by the seamen acting as artillery from batteries which had been erected and disposed with great skill and activity. The general having made such dispositions, the troops performed their parts with equal courage, enterprise, and effect in every point. They drove the enemy from post to post after a vigorous contest, and at last made themselves masters of the Morne. The enemy fled precipitately, either towards the town, or to the Morne Garnier. This second eminence was as strong as the first, and much higher; and until it was carried, the town could not be reduced. It was three days before batteries could be erected, and other dispositions made, for carrying the place. While the British troops were preparing these, the whole force of the enemy descended from the hill, and sallied from the town upon the advanced posts of the English. The main body rushing forward to support their countrymen, not only repulsed the enemy, but pursued them past the ravines, ascended the hill, seized the redoubts, and made themselves completely masters of

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III.1762.
which ca-
pitulates.

Morne Garnier. The French regular troops escaped into the town, and the militia dispersed into the country. The situation which commanded the town and citadel being now possessed by the British, as soon as the batteries were completed, and before they began to play, the enemy capitulated on the 4th of February.

ST. PIERRE still remained to be reduced. This was a city which, though not so strong as Fort Royal, might have made a considerable resistance, if the garrison had been proportioned to the strength of the place and of the interjacent country; but the militia were quite disheartened and scattered; great part of the regulars were killed or taken at Fort Royal; the planters were unwilling that their country should be laid waste, in a defence which, from the late and former successes of the English, they were convinced would be unavailing. It was therefore, agreed, that they should capitulate for that place and the whole island, which was accordingly surrendered on the 12th of February. Martinico, Granada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincents, soon after yielded to the British arms. This important undertaking is to be imputed to the plans of Mr. Pitt; the next which we have to record, belongs to his successors in the conduct of the war.

THE chief advantage expected by France from the assistance of Spain, was through her finances and navy. Aware of this expectation, the British ministry formed their plan for the campaign with a view to these objects, and proposed to strike a blow at the beginning of the war, which should debilitate and exhaust her new antagonist, disappoint the hopes of her old enemy, and compel both France and Spain to sue for peace. The whole navigation and trade of the Spanish West Indies centred in the Havannah; an expedition, therefore, against this important possession was resolved on, as soon as war commenced. It was both a bolder and a wiser plan to attack the centre and strong hold of our enemy's dominions, than to begin with a place of less consequence, in hopes thereby of gradually attaining the principal conquest. In the war with Spain which commenced in 1739, we had begun with subordinate attacks. The capture of Porto Bello did not ensure the capture of Carthagena, nor would the capture of

Expedition
proposed
to the
Havannah.

Carthageua have ensured the command of the Spanish West Indies. The conquest of the Havannah would intercept the enemy's principal resources, and, if we chose to pursue our advances, expose the whole of Spanish America. The attempt against Carthageua was as difficult as against the Havannah. Where the danger and expense of two objects were equal, it was wiser to employ them upon that which, if attained, would be most advantageous. The policy of lord Bute and his coadjutors in this undertaking, therefore, as war ministers, was superior to the policy of sir Robert Walpole and his colleagues.

SUCH an enterprise being determined on by ministry, we are next to view their ability in the commanders which they chose, and the preparations which they made for carrying the plan into execution. A very powerful armament was fitted out; and the chief command of the land forces was bestowed on the earl of Albemarle, the friend and military pupil of the duke of Cumberland. Admiral Pococke, who had extended the naval glory and political power of his country in the East Indies, was employed to command the fleet for humbling our enemies in the West. Commodore Keppel, brother to the earl of Albemarle, was second in naval command. Thus administration regarded not only the skill of its principal officers, but their harmony, thereby avoiding the fatal error which had so powerfully tended to our discomfiture at Carthageua. On the 5th of March they sailed from Portsmouth; and on their arrival off the coast of Hispaniola, were reinforced by a great part of the fleet and army which had achieved the conquest of Martinico and the other Caribbee islands. There were two routes from cape Nichola to the Havannah; the one circuitous, to the south of Cuba, between that island and Jamaica, round by cape St. Antonio; the other direct, to the north of Cuba, by the old Bahama channel. The first was the safer, but tedious: the second, in a narrow strait, by much the shorter, but hazardous. The success of the enterprise depended in a great degree on its being far advanced before the hurricane season: despatch was therefore a very important object. The season of the year was not stormy, and it was thought most advisable to take the northern route. This attempt was esteemed

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bold, but not rash; and so admirable were the dispositions of the naval commander, in sending vessels to reconnoitre the passage, and dividing the armament according to the nature of the sea, that, by favourableness of weather, with which from his knowledge of that climate and situation he had laid his account, our whole force in nine days passed through this strait, seven hundred miles in length, without the smallest interruption; and on the fifth of June arrived before the place of their destination.

Island of
Cuba.

CUBA, belonging wholly to Spain, is by far the largest island in the West Indies. It runs from east to west, verging towards the north west, about nine hundred miles in length; irregular in breadth, but at an average about one hundred miles. Its nominal capital is St. Jago, on the southeast coast; but the most important place for size, strength, population, and wealth, is the Havannah. The harbour of this city is entered by a narrow passage, about half a mile in length, opening into a large bason, which diverges into three smaller inlets, capacious enough both in extent and depth to contain a thousand of the largest ships, and on all sides secured from the wind. In this haven the rich fleets from the various Spanish settlements in the West Indies and Mexico assemble, before they set sail for Europe. The Havannah, a rendezvous of such wealth, was itself so flourishing and opulent, that no pains were spared to give it proportionate security. The narrow entrance of the harbour was protected on the east side by a very strong fort, called the Moro, on a projecting point of land; and by a fort called Puntal, on the west, which joins the town opposite the Moro fort. The town itself is surrounded by a strong rampart, with bastions, and a deep ditch. The Spanish navy intended for the West Indies, consisting of twenty sail, mostly of the line, were at this time in the harbour of the Havannah. Though not much inferior to the British in maritime force, they did not attempt to risk an engagement; but in other respects made many able dispositions for defending the town. Across the mouth of the harbour they laid a strong boom, behind which they sunk several ships. The English commanders proposed to land on the eastern side, so as to be able at once to invest the Moro, and command

The Ha-
vannah.

the country. To divert the enemy from attending to their design, a great part of the fleet sailed to the westward. While the enemy were attending to the motions of the fleet, our troops on the 7th of June, effected a landing. The army was divided into two great corps; the chief body was employed against fort Moro, the other advanced southwards a considerable way into the inland parts, to cover the siege, and secure our watering and foraging parties, and on that side to cut off the enemy's intercourse with the country. A detachment was posted under colonel Howe to the westward, to create a diversion in favour of the principal objects, and to intercept the communication with the country on that side. Thus the place was either invested or blocked on the east, south, and west, by the army; and on the north, by the fleet, which commanded the sea.

NOTWITHSTANDING this masterly disposition, the British had still very great difficulties, dangers, and hardships, to encounter. The sun being then vertical, the heat was excessive; water was to be fetched from a great distance, over paths to be cut through thick woods, and the cannon was to be dragged over a rough and rocky shore; but such a spirit diffused itself over the whole army, and such an unanimity prevailed among the commanders, officers, soldiers, and sailors, that in spite of heat, thirst, fatigue, and the enemy's fire, they erected batteries against the Moro. The enemy not only acted on the defensive, but on the fourth week of the siege made a powerful sally, in which they were repulsed, with the loss of three hundred men. Our sea forces, who had hitherto afforded every assistance on shore to the land service, on the 1st of July made a very bold attempt from their own element, and opened their broadsides with a terrible fire against the Moro. As it was impossible, however, to act from sea upon that castle, without being also exposed to the batteries of Puntal, they were extremely annoyed from both garrisons, and at length obliged to desist from their cannonade. Although this heroic effort of the ships produced little effect on the north side, which they attacked, yet it was of great service to the land besiegers on the east side of the Moro. While the defend-

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ers of the garrison were returning the fire of the fleet, they paid much less attention than usual to our land batteries, which during that time did considerable damage to their works, but when the sea attack had ceased, they were enabled to return to their operations towards the land with their former effect. The contest was carried on with extreme perseverance and obstinacy, and the event seemed very doubtful. While affairs were in this state, the principal British battery took fire, and was unfortunately consumed. Sickness now becoming prevalent in this severe service and destructive climate, rendered one half of the forces unfit for duty, and doubled the fatigue of the other. The want of fresh provisions and wholesome water increased the diseases, and aggravated the sufferings of the besiegers. As they were daily more exhausted, and the season advanced towards the time of the hurricanes, their hopes of ultimate success became fainter. Those who escaped the dangerous siege and dreadful climate, expected final destruction if they waited till the tempest began. From North America they had long looked for reinforcements, but none arrived. Oppressed with these distresses, the commanders endeavoured to reanimate their troops. The enemy, they represented, had made a most gallant resistance; and were Spaniards in military efforts to surpass Britons? The richest prize was before them, which British valour and perseverance might still obtain. These incitements inspiring the heroic breasts of British soldiers and sailors to the most astonishing exertions, new batteries were raised. They now silenced the cannon of the fort, beat to pieces the upper works, and made a lodgment in the covered way; hence their hopes of success revived. At this time the Jamaica fleet brought them a supply of provisions, and in a few days they were succoured by a strong reinforcement from New York. Their hopes now redoubled: but a new difficulty appeared after their lodgment was effected, from an immense ditch, which was cut chiefly in the solid rock. A thin ridge, however, had been left to flank the ditch towards the sea; this, though totally uncovered, the miners passed without fear, and were enabled to carry on their operations in the wall. The gover-

nor of the Havannah seeing that the Moro must soon fall, unless an effort was made for its relief, sent a great body across the harbour on the 22d July before daybreak, to attack our posts in three points; but they were repulsed with severe loss. Meanwhile our miners advanced rapidly in their operations; a part of the wall was blown up, the ruins fell into the ditch, and a breach was left, which the engineer judging practicable, the general marched at the head of his troops to attack, mounted the breach, and entered the fort. The enemy made a brave but ineffectual resistance; the gallant commander fell, and the Moro was taken by the British troops. No time was lost in improving this momentous advantage. A second reinforcement now arrived, which still farther encouraged the exertions of our armament. As the Moro commanded the whole eastern part of the town, the fire of the fort was turned against the enemy; a line of batteries was placed from the fort along the hill on the extremity of which it stood, and another line was erected on the west side of the town. On the 10th of August, when they were all prepared to play, the general informed the governor by a message, that, knowing the irresistible force of the attack which he was ready to make, he suspended it, in order to give him time to capitulate. The governor replied, that he would defend the place to the last extremity. The general the next morning ordered the fire to commence from all the batteries, which, after playing for six hours with most tremendous effect, compelled the enemy to hang out a flag of truce. A capitulation was concluded; and the English troops took possession of the Havannah on the 14th of August, after a siege of two months and nine days. The conquest of the Havannah was the most important exploit achieved during the war. The reduction of so strong a fortress was an arduous military enterprise; the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet was a very great naval victory; the plunder taken, amounting to three millions sterling, was a most lucrative acquisition; and the enemy being deprived of the chief sinews of war, was a decisive blow that compelled them to sue for peace.

Capture.

WHILE the English efforts were so successful against the power and influence of Spain in the West Indies,

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Manilla
taken.

strenuous and successful exertions were also made in the East. As soon as it was known that hostilities had commenced, an armament equipped at Madras sailed against Manilla, the chief city of the Philippine islands. The expedition appeared before that settlement on the 23d of September, which, after a short and vigorous resistance, was taken on the 4th of October. A capitulation was offered for ransoming the place at four millions of dollars, about 900,000*l.* sterling, and accepted. An Accapulco ship, valued at about three millions of dollars, was soon after taken in those seas.

Capture of
the Her-
mione.

IN Europe, a very important Spanish treasure was obtained by the capture of the *Hermione*, from Peru to Cadiz, by two English frigates near cape St. Vincents: the prize was estimated at a million sterling.

War in
Portugal.

THE Bourbons had entertained great hopes of success and advantage in their war with Portugal; and at first their expectations appeared likely to be realized. Their declared object was, to exclude the English from the military and commercial use of the Portuguese ports, especially Oporto and Lisbon, to which they had hitherto resorted; and to this their efforts were chiefly directed. They planned the invasion in three divisions: the first, in the north of Portugal, between the Minho and the Douro; the second, in the middle, between the Douro and the Tagus; and the third, to the south of the Tagus, to cooperate on that side with the middle corps in its attempt upon Lisbon. The northern division, under the marquis de Sarria, commenced hostilities; entered the Portuguese province of Tracos Montes, and invested Miranda, the capital of that district. This city might have made a vigorous defence, but very unfortunately a powder magazine blew up by accident, the fortifications were ruined, and the Spaniards, before they had raised their first battery, marched into the town by the breaches in the wall. Before the end of May, they had made such progress, that Oporto was in imminent danger; and the English admiralty, under the apprehension of capture, prepared transports to carry off British effects. The Portuguese peasants, instigated and directed by some English officers, arming themselves, took possession of a defile through

May 30.

which the enemy must necessarily pass, drove them back, and thereby checked their progress upon that side. The middle division of the Spaniards entered Portugal by Beira, and laid siege to Almeyda, on the frontiers of Spain. This city made a gallant resistance; but the Spaniards being joined by the greater part of their northern army, and by eight thousand auxiliaries, compelled it to capitulate on the 25th of August. After this capture, the Spaniards made themselves masters of the greater part of the province of Beira, as far as the Tagus, and even Lisbon itself was in danger.

At this juncture a body of troops arrived from England under the command of brigadier general Burgoyne; and count la Lippe, a German officer of great celebrity, was placed at the head of the native forces. Early in the campaign the court of Lisbon had not paid the proper and prudent attention to the advice of the British ambassador and officers, but, taught by their miscarriages, and influenced by the persuasions of la Lippe, they now adopted a different line of conduct. The Portuguese and English commanders, having in concert investigated the state of affairs, adopted a plan of military policy very frequently successful. The most effectual measure of defensive war, they concluded to be offensive operations. History informed them, that the best mode of relieving a country from invasion, was by invading the country of the enemy. The third body of the Spaniards destined for southern Portugal, was still in Spanish Estremadura. Should it effect a junction with the army in Beira, it was probable that the whole would overwhelm the Portuguese and their auxiliaries. While la Lippe himself watched the motions of the middle army, he sent general Burgoyne into Spain against the other, posted at Valentia d'Alcantara,^k where they also understood the enemy had considerable magazines. Burgoyne, by a forced march of five days, arrived at Valentia, surprised the Spanish troops, defeated them, destroyed one of the best regiments in their service, and took many prisoners, including their principal officers and the general. Though the British

^k Not the great city of Valentia, which is in an opposite part of the kingdom.

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Spaniards
defeated.Affairs of
Frederic.Death of
Elizabeth
of Russia:

were disappointed in their expectation of finding magazines in this place, yet their success produced a very important change in the aspect of the campaign. It not only prevented the invasion of Portugal on that side, but disconcerted the plan of the main army; which was, to cross the Tagus from Beira, a mountainous country, to Alentejo, an open champaign country, where their cavalry, in which their chief force consisted, could act with the full effect. The chief Bourbon army still continued to attempt the passage of the Tagus, to the banks of which they were now advanced. La Lippe and Burgoyne, by very active and skilful efforts, prevented them from effecting their purpose. Burgoyne being posted at Villa Velha, on the southern bank of the river, where the Spaniards occupied the opposite side, observing their camp was not guarded with military vigilance, and that their flank and rear were uncovered, determined to attack them by surprise. Accordingly, fording the river in the night of October the 6th, he attacked them on the flank, while colonel Lee assaulted them on the rear, and defeated them with great slaughter. This victory, which at another time of the year might have been attended only with temporary advantages, from the advanced season proved decisive. Great rains falling, and winter approaching, the enemy, having seized no posts fit for winter quarters, evacuated Estremadura, and returned to the frontiers of Spain. Thus, after partial success, they were entirely defeated in the great object of the campaign; and the unjust ambition, which had stimulated the Bourbons to war with Portugal, ended in disappointment, and disaster to themselves.

IN winter 1761-2, at a time when the king of Prussia's affairs appeared to be at the lowest ebb, and when, from the events of the preceding campaign and the progress of the enemy, little doubt was entertained that, in the ensuing summer, the combined parties would attain their object in the dismemberment of his dominions, an event took place which made a total change in the situation of the contending parties. This was the death of the empress Elizabeth of Russia, the zealous friend of the house of Austria, and the inveterate enemy of Frederic, on the

2d of January 1762. Elizabeth's enmity to the Prussian king in some degree arose from resentment, but was much more the result of ambitious policy. By conquering Prussia, in addition to the extent of coast which she already possessed on the Baltic, she would have the means of becoming a very great maritime power, the first object of the Russian sovereign since czar Peter the great. She would also open the way to an irresistible power in Poland, and be able to overawe Denmark, and her ancient rival Sweden; but if the power of the king of Prussia continued entire, these great objects could not be attained. Peter, her heir, was partial to the king of Prussia; and, as we have seen, used his influence, in 1758, to call off the Russians. On his accession to the throne, he immediately concluded a peace and an alliance with Prussia; and the Russian army in a short time joined the troops of Frederic against Austria. At this time, Sweden, which had been principally directed by Russia, also made peace with the Prussian king. This was a most unexpected revolution in Frederic's favour, as it left him, now supported by Russia, to contend with Austria only.

favourable
to Fred-
eric.

A TREATY had been annually renewed between Britain and Prussia, by which they engaged not to conclude a peace without mutual consent; and this year the British government refused the renewal. Frederic exclaimed bitterly against this conduct as a breach of faith,¹ but without reason: the engagement being expired, its renewal was no longer a question of justice, but of policy. When the king of Prussia was pressed by a combination of enemies, it became necessary for Britain to support him in order to preserve the balance of power, but now he was more than a match for his enemies. Though it was our interest to prevent him from being overwhelmed, we had no interest in promoting his ambition; the war in Germany, therefore, was continued, not to support Frederic, but to oppose France.

THE French were in possession of Cassel, and great part of Westphalia. Marshal Broglie was now displaced from the command; the prince de Soubise succeeded to

Operations
of prince
Ferdinand.

¹ See his Seven years War---winter 1761-2.

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his employment of general in chief, and marshal d'Estrees was second in command. The French this year maintained only one army in Germany, with a reserve under the prince of Condé, to cover the Lower Rhine; and their object, as in the former year, was to penetrate into Hanover. Prince Ferdinand's purpose was nearly the same as in the preceding campaign, to dispossess the enemy of their conquests, and drive them out of Germany. He sent the hereditary prince to oppose Condé, while he himself formed his measures against the main army. The French, at the opening of the campaign, were strongly posted on the frontiers of Hesse at a place called Graebestein; and, trusting to their position, apprehended no attack from prince Ferdinand. The prince, however, made a general assault upon the camp on the 4th of July; in which, by his skill and intrepidity, the valour of his whole army, and particularly the courage and activity of the marquis of Granby, he gained so great a victory, as to give him a decided superiority through the whole campaign. Every measure of prince Ferdinand was part of a well digested and arranged plan; so that when successful, he was able to make the best use of his advantage. Lord Granby and lord Frederic Cavendish were sent forward in pursuit of a numerous body of French that were stationed at Horn, in order to preserve the communication between the main army and Franckfort. The English commanders attacked the enemy with such vigour on the 6th of July, that though they defended themselves valiantly, they were defeated and routed. By this victory, the intercourse with their magazines at Franckfort was entirely intercepted; and they now found it necessary to evacuate Gottingen. Prince Ferdinand attacked prince Xavier, who commanded the Saxon auxiliaries in the French pay at the Fulda, and defeated him; but marshal d'Estrees coming to his support, saved him from utter destruction. The French generals being straitened for provisions and hard pressed on every side, thought it expedient to call the prince of Condé to their assistance. The hereditary prince, finding that the reserves of the enemy were preparing to join the main army, made dispositions for obstructing their progress. Prince Ferdi-

Achievement of
Granby
and the
English
troops.

and endeavoured to bring the French to battle before the junction could be effected, and proposed to ford the Fulda and make a general attack on the 8th of August; but, immense rains having fallen, the river was impassable. The general of the allies sent his second nephew, prince Frederic of Brunswick, towards Cassel, with a view to blockade that place. The hereditary prince watched the prince of Condé so closely, that he could not advance to join the main army: and the prince de Soubise, therefore, was obliged to retreat to join the reserves. The hereditary prince, on the 30th of August, attacked a body of French, which he conceived to be a detachment; but soon found that it was the vanguard of Soubise's army. His serene highness defended himself with his usual conduct and intrepidity; but, being pressed by superiority of numbers, and dangerously wounded, his troops were obliged to give way. This misfortune for a time disconcerted prince Ferdinand's plan; but having with the utmost despatch collected the routed forces, he again prepared to act on the defensive; and prince Soubise, to avoid an engagement, retired. Prince Ferdinand's army being now between the French and Cassel, prince Frederic regularly invested that city on the 15th of October, and on the 7th of November, it surrendered by capitulation, and the whole of Hesse was recovered. Thus, in the campaign of 1762, the French, who had projected to conquer Hanover, were, by the skill and courage of prince Ferdinand, the hereditary prince, and lord Granby, driven from their former conquests.

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Success of
the allies.

The enemy
are driven
from Ger-
many.

THE king of Prussia, instead of being obliged to act on the defensive, was now enabled to resume offensive operations. His object was to recover Silesia, compel marshal Daun, who was posted there, to retire to Bohemia, and afterwards to reinforce prince Henry (now in Saxony,) and a second time conquer that electorate. To distract the attention of marshal Daun, he employed a body of troops to assist the Tartars, whom he had instigated to harass Hungary and Moravia. In June, Frederic being joined by the Russians, made great advances, and, without any regular battle, obliged marshal Daun to abandon very strong posts in Silesia, to retire to the extre-

Campaign
of Frede-
ric.

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mities of that country, and leave Schweidnitz entirely uncovered. With his Russian auxiliaries Frederic now prepared to invest that city, and a considerable body of those allies ravaged Bohemia; when a very unexpected and extraordinary revolution threatened to overturn his plan of operations.

Peter III.
of Russia.

PETER III. no sooner ascended the throne of Russia, than he showed that he had fallen into one of the most fatal errors which a sovereign of ordinary capacity can commit; this was, the adoption of the example of a very able and extraordinary ruler for the model of his conduct. Peter, indeed, chose two very great men for his patterns; his grandfather czar Peter the Great, in civil and political; and the king of Prussia, in military departments. The government of Russia, absolutely despotic, is, from this very despotism, the most insecure to its holder, unless he has the policy to conciliate the affections of its supporters. Fear being the principle of a despotic government, its most effectual props are gloomy superstition and military force; accordingly in Russia, priests and soldiers were the chief stays of the emperor's authority, and with both these bodies Peter imprudently contended. He began, like Peter I., with opposing the exorbitant pretensions of the Russian clergy, and ventured to appropriate their possessions to the public revenue. The Russians were the slaves of the most abject superstition that could enchain ignorant minds, and valued their priests more than their monarch. The extraordinary qualities of the first Peter, and the benefits accruing from them to the country, had given to him a superiority over any of their clergy, even in the estimation of the bigoted barbarians whom he governed; but in the character of his grandson, there was nothing which would excite such veneration, or confer such influence. The boundless admiration of Peter for the king of Prussia extended to the adoption of his religious opinions, and operated in a line of conduct which that king was too wise to pursue. He interfered with the institutions that were venerated by his people, and obstructed rites and ceremonies, which, however trivial in themselves, no wise governor will interrupt when associated by his subjects with religious doctrines and sentiments. Desir-

ous of innovation, but narrow in understanding, he pursued it in objects commensurate to the littleness of his own mind. He proposed changes in the dress of the clergy, and that the ecclesiastics should no longer, as before, be distinguished by beards. To this momentous change he added also some new regulations about images and pictures in churches. From this attack upon the beards of the living, and the pictures of the deceased, together with various other alterations, his subjects apprehended their prince to be a heretic, if not an infidel. In the seizure of the revenues, however, the clergy found the most dangerous apostacy from the purity of the Greek church, and regarded his reforms with dread and resentment: with them also the other powerful body, the army, concurred in discontent. The same admiration of the king of Prussia made Peter extravagantly fond of his military discipline; and being a native of Holstein, he was farther induced to this preference by a national partiality. He was evidently most attached to the German guards, in preference to the native Russians. He himself wore the Prussian uniform, and obliged his soldiers to adopt that dress, and abandon the modes with which in their minds the glory of Russia was associated: in short, he disgusted the Russian army. The king of Prussia foresaw the dangers of his ally from these precipitate changes, and frequently, by private letters and messengers, endeavoured to dissuade him from persisting in his present conduct; his dissuasives, however, were unavailing. Meanwhile Peter was preparing to go to war with Denmark, on account of a dispute between that country and Holstein in which Russia had no concern. This project increased the disaffection of his subjects, who considered themselves as sacrificed to German interests, and a conspiracy was formed against his government. As Peter had alienated the affections of his subjects, he had long lost those of his own family. His wife Catharine, a princess of the house of Anhalt Zerbst, was a woman of powerful understanding and boundless ambition.^m Prone to the gallantry so prevalent at the dissolute court of the voluptu-

Catharine.

^m See Memoirs of Catharine II.

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Revolution
in Russia.Death of
Peter.

ous Elizabeth, her love of pleasure was secondary to her love of power: her most distinguished favourites were paramours of such talents and qualities as could well promote great designs. For the last seven years of Elizabeth's reign, Peter and she had rarely cohabited; each was occupied with their respective intrigues. Catharine, too able and prudent to neglect appearances, was somewhat attentive to concealment; while Peter, from the silly vanity of a weak understanding, was ostentatious in the display of amours. He lived openly with the countess of Woronzoff; and was even suspected to intend confining the empress, and raising his courtesan to the throne. The principal nobles and chief officers of the state and army formed a combination to depose a prince, who was hated for his conduct, and despised for his incapacity. So little was the czar informed respecting his most momentous interests, that the conspiracy became general, and the clergy were met for his deposition, before he knew that such a step had been projected. Catharine, understanding that the design was declared, immediately wrote to Petersburg, and harangued the guards, who unanimously declared Peter deposed, and the empress independent sovereign of Russia. This act being applauded by the nobility and clergy, Catharine, at the head of her troops, marched towards a country seat in which Peter resided. The weak and timid prince, being informed that he was no longer emperor of Russia, quickly wrote letters renouncing the sovereignty, and requested leave to retire to his native Holstein with his mistress; but this leave was denied. He was farther intimidated to sign a paper, declaring his incapacity for government, the weakness and folly of his administration, and the necessity of his deposition: he was thrown into prison, where in a few days, on the 6th of July, he died of what was called an hæmorrhoidal colic, the causes and symptoms of which it belongs not to this history to investigate.

HAVING ascended the throne of Russia, Catharine fearing that the Prussian king might prevail on the Russian troops who served in his army to declare in favour of Peter, ordered them to withdraw from Silesia into Poland. Frederic, contrary to her apprehensions, made

no opposition to their departure; he only requested that it might be deferred for three days, to which the general very readily consented. The Austrian commanders were ignorant of the revolution in Russia. Frederic, trusting to their conviction that the Russians were cooperating with him, attacked marshal Daun, compelled him to retire, and by this means rendered the siege of Schweidnitz still practicable. Though he was now deprived of auxiliaries, he invested the town on the 20th of September, and soon compelled it to surrender. In Saxony prince Henry had been no less successful, when, towards the close of the campaign, he was reinforced by his royal brother; and all the conquests that he had achieved in that country early in the war, and lost the last campaign, were completely recovered.

In the internal history of England the most material event which happened this summer, was the birth of a son and heir to their majesties. On the 12th of August, between seven and eight in the morning, the queen was safely delivered of a prince. Just after this important accession to the royal family was announced, the treasures of the captured ship *Hermione*, drawn in wagons, and escorted by troops from Portsmouth to London, entered St. James's street in a grand procession. His majesty and the nobility went to the palace windows, and joined with the acclamations of the people on two such joyful occasions. The young prince, from his birth electoral prince of Brunswick Lunenburg, duke of Cornwall and Rothsay, earl of Carrick, baron of Renfrew, lord of the Isles, and great steward of Scotland, was, on the 17th, by letters patent under the seal of Great Britain, created prince of Wales and earl of Chester. On the 8th of September, the anniversary of the royal marriage, his highness was christened by his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, the duke of Cumberland and the duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz being godfathers, and the princess dowager godmother. The young prince was named George Augustus Frederic.

Birth of
the prince
of Wales.

THE court of France, in the events of this campaign, found that the expectations which had been formed from the family compact were entirely disappointed. Spain saw

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The belligerent powers manifest pacific dispositions.

Conduct and situation of lord Bute.

that her interference to assist the principal branch of the Bourbons, instead of producing the desired effect to her ally, was involving herself in similar disasters and humiliation. They both began to wish sincerely for peace, and were in a disposition to purchase it by very great concessions. In Britain, changes had taken place which rendered the reestablishment of tranquillity much less difficult. From the commencement of his administration, the earl of Bute had shown a disposition to procure peace, as soon as it could be concluded with sound policy and national honour; and, though patriotism may have had its share in exciting this desire, yet there were other causes which no doubt cooperated. These are to be found in the character of the Bute administration, the state of parties, and of the public mind. The earl of Bute had for some months been first lord of the treasury, and the greater number of whigs had either been dismissed, or resigned; so that there was a formidable confederacy hostile to the present minister. A less numerous but more able body, headed by Mr. Pitt, without coalescing with the Newcastle party, was adverse to the ministry. From the known attachment of his majesty to the earl of Bute, that nobleman was accounted the private and confidential friend of the king. Being decorated with honours at the commencement of the reign, and soon after promoted to high office, which was not in the public estimation conferred upon his political talents, and virtues, he was generally esteemed and styled the royal FAVOURITE. Though his majesty himself proposed to govern the kingdom by wisdom and virtue, and not by party, yet that was thought to be far from lord Bute's object. Since, by the appointment of him and his friends, the nation did not conceive that there was an accession of wisdom or virtue to his majesty's counsels; and since their rise was imputed to private favour and not public merit, it was apprehended that the project of the minister was to govern by what his opponents called a system of mere court favouritism. The supposed operation of this plan was exhibited with great force and eloquence, both by speakers in parliament and political writers." The deportment of

ⁿ The substance and spirit of all that was said, or perhaps could be said, upon this subject, may be seen in Mr. Burke's celebrated pamphlet, on the Discontents, published in the Grafton administration.

Bute was by no means such as tended to counteract this unpopularity. Notwithstanding his erudition and knowledge, he had imbibed the pride and prejudices of a Scottish chieftain. With exemplary morals, he was reserved and haughty in his manners, and in that respect as different from the frank, affable duke of Newcastle, as in point of abilities from Mr. Pitt. He was, besides, charged by the whigs with being the friend of arbitrary power. In his appointment to subordinate offices, he had frequently removed Englishmen of known and respectable characters, to make room for Scotchmen, who, however respectable, were not known, and were presumed to be the abettors of arbitrary power; and this partiality increased the popular ferment. The whig party had been uniformly connected with the moneyed interest, and Pitt possessed the most unlimited confidence of that important body of men. The supplies of the current year had been raised while the duke of Newcastle was at the head of the treasury. On lord Bute they had no reliance; and in the year which was to follow, the capitalists were more likely to obstruct than to facilitate the supplies. A great host of opposition, though in two divisions yet one in enmity to the minister, appeared ready to attack him when parliament should be assembled. So thwarted and obstructed, to carry on the war with the force and success which the nation, exulting in recent victory, expected, would, he conceived, be impracticable. Besides, he thought the actual resources of the country were nearly exhausted, and that another campaign would produce financial distress; the difficulties of perseverance in attempting to reduce the power of Bourbon, therefore, appeared to his mind as impossibilities: for all these reasons, he was desirous that a negotiation should be commenced.

render him
favourable
to peace.

THE king of Sardinia, the friend of the contending states on both sides, understanding their respective and relative dispositions, offered so far to interfere, as to communicate them to each of the parties. The belligerent powers very readily consented to open a negotiation; and it was agreed, that a person of the first distinction should be reciprocally sent to London and Paris. The duke de Nivernois came on the part of France, and the duke of

Negotia-
tions.

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Bedford went on the part of England, in September 1762. In the negotiation of 1761, a principle had been established between the two crowns, that their respective propositions, if the treaty were broken off, should be considered as retracted, and as never made : the negotiation of 1762, therefore, was not a renewal of that of 1761. Still however, from the similarity of circumstances, it assumed somewhat of a similar spirit, so far as regarded the peculiar interests of Great Britain ; and respecting Germany, there was a very material difference.

Terms.

FRANCE and England both recurred to the original cause of the war, the limits of the North American territories. The French king not only renounced all pretensions to Nova Scotia, but ceded the whole of Canada and its dependencies, including Louisiana ; and whereas the French had pretended a right to the country which reaches from the Ohio to St. Lawrence, and had built a train of forts to command the communication, his christian majesty ceded the whole of that tract, and also the forts and settlements. Spain relinquished Florida ; so that from Hudson's bay to the southern cape of Florida, from the Atlantic to the confines of New Mexico, the continent of North America was a part of the British empire. To command the navigation of St. Lawrence, and to secure the possessions of her northren acquisitions, Britain was to retain the islands of cape Breton and St. John. We were to give up to the French the small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon near Newfoundland. By the treaty of Utrecht, the Newfoundland fishery had been divided between France and England. Britain wished her rival now to relinquish the whole, but France would not hearken to the proposal ; at length a compromise was made, by which Britain was to possess the greater share. The next object was the West Indies, which was one of the chief sources of commerce, wealth, and maritime force to our enemies ; here we had made great conquests ; the question was, whether we should retain them, as acquisitions to ourselves, and as an increased security for a PERMANENT peace, by diminishing to the opposite party the means of war ; or, without carrying our views to distant objects, sacrifice them, in order to facilitate an immediate peace.

The British ministers favoured the latter alternative. We ceded to Spain the Havannah, with a considerable part of Cuba; to France, the islands of Martinico, Guadaloupe, Marigalante, Desirade, and St. Lucia. We retained the islands of Tobago, Dominica, St. Vincents, and the Grenades. To the three former (as well as to St. Lucia, which surrendered) Britain had an old claim; the last only was a new acquisition, and the three others were then of little value. Spain consented that the English should without disturbance cut logwood in the bay of Honduras. In Europe, Belleisle was restored to the French, Minorca to the English, and the fortifications of Dunkirk were to be destroyed, according to former treaties. In Africa, Goree was restored to France, and Senegal retained by England. In the East Indies, Britain returned all the French factories and settlements; France having stipulated to erect no fortifications in Bengal or Orissa, and to acknowledge the reigning subahs of Bengal, the Decan, and the Carnatic.

CONCERNING our allies, it was agreed, that the French and Spaniards should evacuate Portugal, and that France and Britain should observe a strict neutrality respecting the disputes in Germany; that each should withdraw their forces, and discontinue subsidies. Such are the outlines of the peace, of which the preliminaries were signed and interchanged on the 3d of November 1762, between the ministers of Great Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal.

Peace concluded.

ON the 25th of November, parliament met: his majesty's speech described the successes obtained in various quarters of the world by the perseverance and valour of his land and sea forces; and stated, as the consequence of those victories, that the enemy had made peace on terms highly advantageous to Britain; by which his territories were greatly augmented, and new sources were opened for trade and manufactures. He recommended attention to the improvement of our acquisitions, and firmness and unanimity, as the surest means of rendering the advantages of the peace more extensive and permanent.

Meeting of parliament.

THE preliminaries underwent a very able discussion in both houses. Mr. Pitt attacked them as derogatory to

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The peace
discussed,
December
9th.Argu-
ments
against it.

the honour and interests of the kingdom, as being totally inadequate to the terms which our successes might have commanded, as a surrender of those advantages which our glorious efforts had procured to ourselves, and a sacrifice of public faith in the abandonment of our allies. These general objections he and others illustrated by a detailed inquiry into the several articles. France, it was contended, was chiefly formidable to us as a maritime and commercial nation. Though we had acquired an extensive territory in America, yet by our stipulation respecting the Newfoundland fishery, we had left her a nursery of seamen; by the restoration of her West India possessions, we had given her back the means of a most beneficial commerce; and thus had put her in the way of recovering her losses, and being again formidable on our own element. The fishery formed a multitude of seamen, and the West India islands employed them when fully trained. France, by possessing a much greater quantity of sugar land, had been long superior to us in this lucrative branch of commerce. She had thus enriched her merchants, increased her revenue, and strengthened her navy: why then, after we had in a just and necessary war deprived her of such valuable possessions, should we restore to her the means of again annoying ourselves? The retention of the considerable French plantations, was necessary to the permanent security of a peace. Besides, after so expensive a war, our victories gave us a claim to some indemnification; in that view, the islands would have been the most productive of our conquests. Our acquisitions in America might tend to our security, but it would be very long before they could lead to our indemnification. They neither increased in any important degree our commerce, nor diminished the commerce of France; but the West India islands, if retained, would have been an immediate great gain to Britain, and loss to our rival. The retention of the West Indies was farther necessary to the improvement of our acquisitions in North America, and also to our commerce with Africa. In that event, it was argued, the African trade would have been augmented by the demand for slaves, and the trade of North America would have all centred in Britain; whereas, the islands being

restored, a great part of the northern colony trade must fall, as it had hitherto done, to those who had lately been our enemies, and would still be our rivals. For these reasons, either Martinico or Guadaloupe, or even both, should have been retained by Britain. The cessions made in Africa and in the East Indies would have fully justified the reservation to ourselves of our West India conquests. Provident policy required that we should have reserved those possessions, and our resources and resistless naval strength would have enabled us to retain them, in defiance of the enemy. If in the negotiation, availing ourselves of our advantages, we had decisively refused such cessions, the enemy would not have adhered to the requisition, with the alternative of the continued war; or, had they been so obstinate, British force would soon have reduced them to compliance. Concerning our ally the king of Prussia, it was insisted, that, in deserting his interests, we had violated the national faith.^a

SUCH were the arguments adduced both in and out of parliament by those who disapproved of the peace, which the minister and his supporters answered to the following effect. The original object of hostilities, was, the security of our continental possessions in North America; the dangers to which these colonies had been exposed, and the expensive and bloody war resulting to Great Britain from those dangers, rendered it necessary to prevent the possibility of their recurrence. Experience had shown, that while France possessed a single place on the continent of America, we should never be secure from a renewal of hostilities: the removal of the French from our neighbourhood in that country, was therefore the most effectual means of preventing future war.^p The security so produced would also tend ultimately to indemnification: as it

Arguments
for it.

^a The writings of those times charged the minister with very gross breach of faith and base treachery, in endeavouring to stimulate both Austria and Russia against Prussia, while he was professing the greatest zeal for the security of that prince; but no authentic evidence is adduced to support the allegation. See History of the Minority, 1762, 1763, 1764, 1765.

^p It has been frequently alleged by speculative politicians, that this very removal of the French from our American colonies, by freeing them from the apprehension of a foreign enemy, encouraged that proud and refractory spirit which ended in revolution. This, however, appears to be a fanciful hypothesis. The Americans were morally certain that the French would join in supporting disaffection, rebellion, and revolt, in order to annoy Great Britain; and they could have contributed their assistance more easily and expeditiously if they had

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would not only save us from the necessity of another war, increase our trade and revenue, and lower our debt, but permit our colonies to extend their commerce and population. The population of the colonies had of late very rapidly advanced, and the increase of trade with the mother country had been proportionate. North America itself would soon afford a demand for our manufactures, and employ almost all the working hands in England. They expatiated on the immense resources to commerce which must arise from the possession of the American continent; and argued, that, great as commercial advantages are, they ought not to be the sole consideration, but that number of subjects and extent of territory, contributed no less to the greatness of an empire. France, they said, would never agree to a considerable cession in the West Indies, where the importance of our possessions depended on the North American colonies, from which they derived their principal provisions and other supplies, and that commerce fully compensated for our inferiority in West India productions. *They contended, that the points which the opposite party had proposed to contest, were not of sufficient importance to justify the continuance of the war on their account.* The king of Prussia we had supported as long as he was likely to be overwhelmed by enemies; but now, by his peace with Sweden and Russia, and by the neutrality of France, he had to contend with Austria only, for which he was fully a match. It was the interest of Britain to save Prussia from destruction, but not to promote her ambition.

THE impartial historian, however, who is totally uninterested in the contentions of parties, must differ from both ministry and opposition. On the subject of Prussia, ministers appeared to have judged prudently, as the reason for defending Frederic was the maintenance of the balance of Europe; when that ceased to be in danger, policy no longer required the waste of our blood and treasure in his contests. Concerning the West Indies, our cessions appear by far too great. The reasons alleged by

retained part of their North American settlements, than when totally deprived of those possessions. In short, this theory originates in French ingenuity, and not in English reasoning.

ministers for the dereliction of such valuable possessions, were futile in the present situation and relative force of the parties. *According to their allegations, France would not give up* WHAT SHE HAD ACTUALLY LOST; but if Britain insisted on the reservation, where were her means of recovery? The *principle* on which the cession was justified, was contrary to magnanimous and wise policy. A declared willingness to abandon momentous advantages, rather than continue a contest to secure them when already possessed, directly tended to make the adversary more stubborn, and afforded an injurious example in future contests. To a power transcendant in resources, it can never be a prudent reason for relinquishing valuable interests, that they are not to be maintained without a struggle. Such conduct is really as contrary to pecuniary economy on balancing accounts upon a large scale, as to national dignity and honour. The abandonment of acquisitions affording to the possessor riches and naval strength, tended, as was foreseen, to furnish France with the means of maintaining another war whenever a favourable opportunity offered. It was unnecessary to expatiate on the advantages which we secured by our acquisitions in North America, as a reason for giving up the West Indies; such being our power, that we could not only have obtained, but enforced both. Our great efforts had certainly exposed us to considerable difficulties, and lord Bute had been uniformly anxious to terminate the war. Peace was desirable; but the peace concluded was not so honourable or advantageous as Britain could have dictated, and contained in itself the seeds of dissolution. The definitive treaty was signed on the 10th of February 1763, and terminated a war begun by boundless ambition, in which defeat and disaster paid the price of impolitic rapacity, and repeated the lesson which former hostilities had so awfully inculcated, that France, seeking the extension of territory and the augmentation of commerce and naval power, by attacking England, employed the most effectual means to prevent the attainment of her purpose.

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THE peace of Fountainbleau, however, though certainly by no means the best which Britain might have concluded in the existing circumstances, produced against

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its framers' obloquy and invectives which they did not deserve. It was openly and loudly asserted, that the earl of Bute entertained the ancient Scotch partiality for France, and intentionally betrayed his king and country.^q It was very plainly insinuated, that the duke of Bedford had been actually bribed by the court of Versailles to conclude a peace on such terms.^r Improbable as these charges were in their nature, and totally unsupported by any extrinsic evidence, yet during the public ferment they obtained very general credit. The tide of popular odium ran extremely high: demagogues never fail to increase the fury of a populace already inflamed, and on the present occasion an additional subject was not long wanting. The war had made a prodigious increase in the encumbrances of the country, and there was such an arrear of floating debt as to render a very large loan necessary; the people, however, could not so clearly see the necessity of taxes being no less requisite at the conclusion, than during the continuance of an expensive war. While exulting in victory, and elated with hopes of crushing their ancient enemy, they did not repine at expense; but now such flattering expectations were terminated by a peace, which was generally disapproved. Ministers were aware, that in such a disposition no scheme of supply would be well received. They therefore determined to impose as few taxes as the public service could possibly admit. The nation, they contended, was exhausted, and it was therefore necessary to repair our finances by the most rigid economy. In pursuance of this plan, they proposed to raise the supplies, first, by taking 2,000,000*l.* out of the sinking fund; secondly, by issuing 1,800,000*l.* in exchequer bills; thirdly, by borrowing 2,800,000*l.* on annuities; and, lastly, by two lotteries for 350,000*l.* each. The rest of the supplies were necessarily raised by taxes. The principle of taxation under the Bute ministry was, to subject luxuries, and not necessities, to imposts for the exigencies of the state. The luxuries of the lower ranks are, on the whole, a much more productive source of revenue, than those of the higher; it was therefore expe-

Finance.

q See North Briton, and Junius's Letters to the Duke of Bedford.

r See Junius's Letter to the duke of Bedford.

dient to include the poor as well as the rich: there were taxes upon beer, ale, and porter directly, and indirectly in that upon malt; as well as upon wine, on which, in this session, an additional duty was imposed. Cyder hitherto had been subject to no impost; it was judged expedient this year to tax that beverage, though in a less proportion than ale and porter, to which in its nature, and in the situation of its principal consumers, it was held most analogous; and to levy it by the same mode, *an excise*. Those who examine the nature and operation of different modes of levying taxes, can very easily perceive, that excise is less burdensome to the consumer than any equivalent raised in customs. Customs, though advanced by the merchant, must ultimately fall on the consumer; as the merchant must not only be reimbursed, but have a profit on all his advance, it follows, that the earlier in trade customs are paid for any commodity, the heavier they must fall on the consumer. The excise being levied on commodities in use, and paid by the consumer, does not require him to reimburse the merchant for his advance, nor to contribute to his profits. But in customs, the tax being involved in the price of the commodity, is not felt as a tax; whereas excise is immediately felt, and, though really lighter, is imagined to be heavier.^s From this unfounded supposition, excise is a much more unpopular mode of taxation, than customs. Two circumstances add to the unpopularity of this species of tax—the necessary procedure of the tax gatherers, and the established mode of trial. The visits of excise officers, it is alleged, are inconsistent with the rights of an Englishman, according to which his house is his castle; yet it is obvious, that there are many other instances in which that castle must be entered for the public good. The next is, the summary process before commissioners, instead of trial by jury; which is really mercy, and not severity, to delinquents. The expense and delay of prosecutions, either by action or indictment, would fall infinitely heavier on defendants, than this expeditious manner of ascertaining the matter in dispute.^t The excise is a much

Excise.

^s See Dr. Smith's Wealth of Nations.

^t See Blackstone's Commentaries, b. iv. p. 281.

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more effectual mode of preventing contraband dealing, than customs; and therefore smugglers are much more interested in abetting the unpopularity to which it is liable from vulgar and inveterate prejudices. From all these causes, every scheme for extending the excise has never failed to excite great opposition and tumult in this country. Sir Robert Walpole's famous scheme, firmly as he was established by the favour of the king and the great whig confederacy, had nearly cost him his place, and was obliged to be abandoned. The enmity to the excise was still undiminished, and was likely to exert itself with redoubled fury against a minister otherwise so unpopular. The cyder tax in itself appears to have been as fair and equitable as any that could have been devised; it merely made those who chose to regale themselves with a distillation from apples, contribute to the revenue, as well as those who chose to regale themselves with a distillation from barley: its prudence, however, was questionable. Great and able statesmen will not be deterred from plans of national benefit, by the misapprehension of popular prejudices and ignorance; because they know, that, though some of their acts may incur censure, their general measures and conduct, which command the veneration of their countrymen, will ultimately prevail over occasional disapprobation. But lord Bute must have been aware, that he was not an object of veneration, since no pains were spared to convince him, that by the majority of Englishmen he was regarded with abhorrence and contempt; that he was the last man who could overbear popular prejudice, however sound the argument might be to justify his financial measures. It was therefore impolitic in him to propose, and still more unwise inflexibly to pursue, this tax, though in itself unobjectionable. He however did persist; and, strong as the opposition^u was

^u The ablest opponent of this tax was Mr. Pitt. That statesman denied the general position of ministers, that the nation was exhausted. There were still resources for carrying on the war longer, and much more towards clearing off incumbrances on the peace. As we were necessarily involved in an immense debt, our wisest policy in such circumstances would be, by liberal and comprehensive grants to add as much as possible to the national income. After discussing in detail the other parts of the financial scheme, he came to the cyder tax, against which he directed the force of his eloquence. Mr. Grenville in answer contended that it was unavoidable. Where (said he) can we lay another

in both houses, loud and violent as the clamours were throughout the kingdom, the bill passed into a law. In pamphlets and periodical publications, and in all popular meetings in the city of London, which were entirely directed by opposition, this act was represented as part of a general scheme formed by lord Bute for plundering England, to gratify the rapacity of Scotchmen,^v and for establishing arbitrary power.

WHILE the minister was by numbers considered, and by many more represented, as meditating the most destructive designs to be effected by his power, to the surprise of the public, as soon as his financial measures were passed, he relinquished his employment, "Having (he said) restored peace to the world, performed his engagements, and established a connexion so strong as no longer to need his assistance, he would now depart to the domestic and literary retirement which he loved." Unexpected resignation of lord Bute.

FEW ministers have been more generally hated than lord Bute was by the English nation; yet, if we estimate his conduct from facts, without being influenced by local or temporary prejudices, we can by no means find just grounds for the odium which he incurred. It is true, an impartial reviewer can find nothing in his political character to justify the praises of some of his supporters, but still less will be found to justify the obloquy of many of his satirists. As a war minister, though his plans discovered little of original genius, and naturally proceeded from the measures of his predecessor, the general state of our resources, the conquests achieved, and the disposition of our fleets and armies, yet they were judicious; the agents appointed to carry them into execution were selected with discernment, and the whole result was successful. His desire of peace, after so long and burdensome a war, was laudable, but perhaps too eagerly manifested. As a negotiator, he did not procure the best terms, which, from

tax of equal efficiency? does Mr. Pitt tell us where we can lay another tax. He several time repeated, "Tell me where you can lay another tax?" Mr. Pitt replied to him in a musical tone, in the words of a favourite song, "Gentle shepherd tell me where?" Mr. Grenville ever afterwards retained the denomination of *gentle shepherd*.

^v See North Briton, No. 43; Churchill's Poems; History of the Minority; and other popular writings of the time.

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our superiority, might have been obtained. His project of finance,^w in itself unobjectionable, derived its impolicy from the unpopularity of his administration. Exposed from unfounded prejudices to calumny, he deserved and earned dislike by his haughty deportment. The manners which custom might have sanctioned from an imperious chieftain to his servile retainers in a remote corner of the island, did not suit the independent spirit of the English metropolis. The respectable mediocrity of his talents with the suitable attainments, and his decent moral character, deserved an esteem which his manners precluded. Since he could not, like Pitt, command by superior genius, he ought, like the duke of Newcastle, to have conciliated by affable demeanour. His partisans have praised the tenacity of lord Bute in his purposes; a quality which, guided by wisdom in the pursuit of right objects, and combined with power to render success ultimately probable, is magnanimous firmness; but without these requisites, is stubborn obstinacy. No charge has been more frequently made against lord Bute, than that he was a promoter of arbitrary principles and measures. This is an accusation for which its supporters could find no grounds in his particular acts; they endeavoured, therefore, to establish their assertion by circuitous arguments. Lord Bute had been the means of dispossessing the whig connexion of power, and had given Scotchmen appointments which were formerly held by the friends of the duke of Newcastle. To impartial investigation, however, it appears evident that lord Bute merely preferred himself, as a minister, to the duke of Newcastle: if we examine his particular nominations, we shall find that he neither exalted the friends of liberty nor despotism, but *his own friends*. It would probably have been better for this country had lord Bute never been minister; but all the evils that may be traced to that period did not necessarily proceed from his measures, as many of them flowed from circumstances over which he had no control. Candour must allow that the comprehensive principle on which his majesty resolved to

^w His loan was much censured, as affording extravagant terms to the lender, and bestowing the principal shares upon Scotchmen. This charge, however, though in some measure true, was greatly exaggerated.

govern, was liberal and meritorious, though patriotism may regret that he was not more fortunate in his first choice. The administration of lord Bute teaches an instructive lesson, that no man can be long an effectual minister of this country, who will not occasionally attend, not only to the well-founded judgment, but also to the prejudices, of Englishmen.

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George Grenville prime minister.—Violent writings.—North Briton.—John Wilkes—his character.—Proceedings against him.—Outcry against ministers.—Wilkes engrosses the chief attention of the public.—Meeting of parliament.—Animadversions on Mr. Wilkes—he is expelled the commons—in the lords charged by the earl of Sandwich with an impious and immoral libel—withdraws into France to avoid prosecution—is outlawed.—His cause continues popular.—Prejudices against Scotchmen.—Churchill's satires.—Question on the legality of general warrants.—Waved by a ministerial majority.—Mr. Grenville's character and schemes of finance.—His measures for the suppression of smuggling—he intimates a project of taxing America.—Marriage of the prince of Brunswick to the princess Augusta of England.—Prince Frederic, the king's second son, appointed bishop of Osnaburg.—Session rises.—Affairs of Europe.—France experiences the effect of her impolitic wars.—Pecuniary embarrassments and refractory parliaments.—Beginning spirit of liberty.—Austria.—Prussia.—Catharine of Russia.—Election of the king of Poland.—Joseph, heir of Austria, chosen king of the Romans. American colonies.—Effect of the minister's intimation in the colonies.—Meeting of parliament.—The minister's plan for levying stamp duties on America—important debates in parliament thereon—opposed on two grounds, right and expediency—represented as a dangerous innovation against beneficial experience—passed into a law.—Stamp act, an important epoch in history.—Ferment in the colonies.—Massachusetts bay takes the lead in opposition, and instigates concerted resistance.—Annexation of the Isle of Man to the crown of Great Britain.—Indisposition of the king.—Bill for a regency in case of a minority.—Ministers lose the favour of the court—are dismissed from administration.

ON the resignation of lord Bute, the honourable George Grenville, brother of earl Temple, became prime minister; lords Egremont and Halifax continued secretaries of state; and the earl of Sandwich was appointed first lord of the admiralty, in the room of Mr. Grenville. As the present ministers were all intimately connected with lord Bute, it was believed that his influence continued to predominate, and that his maxims were still adopted. Party rage increased in virulence, and the press teemed with invective. During the administration of lord Bute, government had appeared totally indifferent to these attacks; but an essay published a few days after his retirement, changed its plan. One of the most abusive assailants of the late minister had been the North Briton, which was begun in the preceding year, and being continued periodically, had, at the resignation of lord Bute, sent forty-four numbers into the world; and to this work, the celebrated Mr. Wilkes was an occasional contributor.

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Mr. Grenville prime minister.

JOHN WILKES, esq. member for Aylesbury, was a man of ready ingenuity, versatile talents, taste, and classical erudition; he was distinguished for wit and pleasantry, and surpassed most men as an entertaining and engaging companion. He was not, however, eminent as a senator or a lawgiver; he was extremely dissipated; as indifferent to religion as to morals, and to his pecuniary circumstances as to either.* Prodigality had ruined his fortune, and profligacy his character. Bankrupt in circumstances and reputation, he had applied to lord Bute to extricate him from his difficulties. His character was so notorious, that a statesman who regarded religion and morality could not patronise him, though he might have easily rendered him a tool. Wilkes in revenge became a flaming patriot, inveighed against the attacks upon our rights and liberties, and against the unprincipled wickedness of the rulers; and the North Briton was one of the chief vehicles of his animadversions. The observations and arguments in this work were merely declamatory

John Wilkes.

The North Briton.

* The character of Mr. Wilkes is accurately, justly, and severely drawn, in a celebrated publication of those times, entitled, the Adventures of a Guinea, vol. iv.

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No. 45.

Wilkes is
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invectives, and the echoes of vulgar prejudices, which nothing but popular prepossession could have preserved from contempt. That abuse which preceding North Britons had poured out against lord Bute and Scotchmen, No. 45. had the audacity to direct with increased scurrility against the sovereign. The matter was false and absurd; the language used by a subject to a sovereign, was totally unworthy of the pen of a gentleman: the wickedness of the intention, and insolence of the address, deserved detestation; but the frothy feebleness of the execution ought to have overwhelmed that sentiment in contemptuous neglect. The course which ministry pursued, gave a consequence both to the paper and its author which the intrinsic merit of either would never have attained. On the 23d of April 1763, this number was published, and it was no sooner perused by ministry, than a council was called, and an immediate prosecution proposed. The chief justice Mansfield declared his disapprobation of that mode of procedure: "I am (he said) decidedly against the prosecution: his consequence will die away if you let him alone; but by public notice of him, you will increase that consequence; which is the very thing he covets, and keeps in full view." The contrary opinion, however, prevailed; and on the 26th, a warrant was issued for seizing the authors, printers, and publishers of the North Briton, No. 45. By the law, a general warrant to apprehend all persons suspected, without specially naming or describing any person, was illegal, and, to use Blackstone's words, "void for its uncertainty; for it is the duty of the MAGISTRATE, and ought not to be left to the officer, to judge of the ground of suspicion." But this mode of procedure, though it was inconsistent

y Blackstone's Commentaries, book iv. p. 291. Judge Blackstone, in a note upon this place, explains how such a proceeding, though actually illegal, came to be reckoned justifiable. "A practice had obtained (he says) in the secretary's office, ever since the restoration, grounded on some clauses in the acts for regulating the press, of issuing general warrants to take up (without naming any person in particular) the authors, printers, and publishers of such obscene and seditious libels as were particularly specified in the warrant. When those acts expired in 1694, the same practice was inadvertently continued in every reign, and under every administration (except the last four years of queen Anne), down to the year 1763: when such a warrant being issued to apprehend the authors, printers, and publishers of a certain seditious libel, its validity was disputed; and the warrant was adjudged by the whole court of king's bench to be void, in the case of *Money v. Leach*."

and his papers are seized.

He is discharged from confinement.

with written law, had all the sanctions which it could derive from precedent. It had been used ever since the revolution, and by the successive whig administrations from that time, had never before been called arbitrary, and indeed was nothing but an irregularity. Mr. Wilkes refused to comply with the warrant, but was at last compelled to accompany the messengers to the secretary of state's office; he was committed to the Tower, HIS PAPERS WERE SEIZED, and admission to him was strictly prohibited, until a motion was made in the court of common pleas for a writ of habeas corpus; by virtue of which, on the 3d of May, he was brought into Westminster hall. That they might have time to form an opinion upon so important a case, the judges deferred decision till the 6th, on which day the lord chief justice Pratt delivered an opinion that did not, as is commonly alleged, declare general warrants to be illegal, but the warrant in question to be void, on a specific ground, *the privilege of parliament*. Members of the legislature are exempted from arrest, except in three cases, treason, felony, and breach of the peace; and as neither of these applied to the charge against Mr. Wilkes, he was released by the court. This liberation, on account of parliamentary privilege, was by the popular party construed to be a victory gained by an oppressed individual over an arbitrary government, wishing to crush constitutional liberty. The day before his release, in consequence of an order from the secretary of state to earl Temple, lord lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, he was discharged from the command of the militia of the county; and the attorney general was directed to commence a prosecution against him for a libel.² Mr. Wilkes not only refused to answer the information which the law officer filed, but on the other hand brought an action against

² Lord Temple having supported Mr. Wilkes in combating the prosecutions carried on at the instance of ministers, his lordship also, in officially announcing the dismissal of Mr. Wilkes from the militia, expressed regret for the loss sustained by the county from this resolution. The conduct of lord Temple was so disagreeable to his majesty's counsellors, including his lordship's own brother Mr. Grenville, that he was discharged from the lord lieutenancy of Buckinghamshire. His lordship continued to support Wilkes; but it was evidently on account of his political prosecution, and not from an approbation of his private conduct and character. See History of the Minority; Universal and Gentleman's Magazines for 1763.

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popular
enthusi-
asm in his
favour.

Mr. Wood, under secretary of state, for seizing his papers, and procured a verdict, with a thousand pounds damages, and full costs of suit. He also commenced a process against lord Halifax, which, however, subsequent occurrences abated. The proceedings relative to Mr. Wilkes during the year 1763, occupied the principal attention of the whole nation. The popular party represented him as the champion of liberty, and the object of persecution on account of his patriotism. Anti-ministerial writers directed their efforts almost exclusively to the praises of Wilkes, and the abuse of his prosecutors. Every publication of which he was the subject, was read with astonishing avidity. Not the populace merely, but men of real talents and virtue, though they detested his profligacy, considering the freedom of Englishmen as violated in his person, associated the idea of WILKES AND LIBERTY.

WILKES was not slow in availing himself of the popular opinion in his favour. He set up a printing press, and published the proceedings against him at one guinea a copy; by the extraordinary sale of which, he procured a degree of affluence to which he had been long unaccustomed, and a degree of importance which he could never otherwise have established. Finally, he expressed his resolution of making the proceedings against him a subject of formal complaint in parliament.

State of
the minis-
try.

THE ministers who now conducted public affairs were wanting, if not in talents, at least in influence and estimation. Their supposed dependence prevented both respect and popularity; and the proceedings against Mr. Wilkes, which were presumed to originate with lord Bute, rendered his conceived tools hateful as a body, however meritorious some of the members were individually accounted. George Grenville, a man of sound understanding, with a resolute heart, and fair and unimpeached integrity, had been, during the greater part of his public life, the friend and partisan of his brother-in-law Mr. Pitt; and, though deserving of respect and influence on his own account, had been indebted for actual consideration to his connexion with that illustrious character. His personal importance was by no means sufficient to give strength and stability

to a political party, especially to an administration having such formidable opponents. Of his colleagues in office, lord Egremont, by his abilities, experience, and reputation, possessed the greatest weight. Of this statesman's assistance, he, on the 21st of August, was deprived by death; and the cabinet was now reckoned extremely feeble and inefficient.

Overtures
to Mr. Pitt.

THE object of the king uniformly was, to employ political ability and virtue in the government of the nation, without regard to party. The first statesman of the kingdom had withdrawn from the cabinet; and to recal his most efficacious talents into the executive service of his country, was the benignant wish of our sovereign. He accordingly made application to Mr. Pitt, and an interview took place on the 27th of August. The patriot being consulted respecting measures and men, delivered his opinion freely and explicitly; that in the circumstances and opinions of the times, it would be expedient for the insurance of public confidence, to restore the great whig families to a certain share of that power from which they had been recently driven, and their deprivation of which had caused such alarms in the country. The king did not object to those general propositions, and appointed Mr. Pitt to a second interview on the 29th, to enter into particular arrangements. On the intervening day, Mr. Pitt conferred with the chief whig leaders, and his own political friends, concerning the persons who should constitute the new cabinet, and a plan was formed. The day following, he met the king at the appointed hour, and laid before him the names of his proposed coadjutors. His majesty, desirous of the services of Mr. Pitt individually, was willing to admit in conjunction with him certain members of the whig party; but, true to the policy with which he had set out, would not surrender the whole direction of his affairs to a combination: he therefore proposed a plan which should, together with Mr. Pitt and some of those whom he recommended, extend to others. Mr. Pitt appears to have adhered to his first opinion, and the king to have persevered in his determination not to yield to so exclusive a system of administration. The conference

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Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

broke off,^d and Mr. Pitt and his friends did not become a part of the ministry. Having failed in the attempt to procure the ministerial services of Mr. Pitt on admissible terms, his majesty bestowed a considerable share of power on the duke of Bedford and his partisans, making the duke himself president of the council. The accession of the numerous connexions of the Bedford family gave Mr. Grenville an assurance of a parliamentary majority, which enabled ministers to carry their projects into execution.

THE session opened in November. His majesty having in his speech exhorted parliament to cultivate the blessings of peace, to improve the acquisitions which they had made, to extend the commerce, increase the revenue, and reduce the debt of the country; in the close, he strongly inculcated the necessity of domestic union and the repression of licentiousness. Before the speech could be taken into consideration, the minister delivered a message from the king to the following effect: "That his majesty having been informed that John Wilkes esq. a member of that house, was the author of a most seditious and dangerous libel, he had caused the said John Wilkes esq. to be apprehended and secured, in order to take his trial in due course of law: and Mr. Wilkes having been discharged out of custody by the court of common pleas, on account of his privilege as a member of that house, and having since refused to answer to an information filed against him by the attorney general, his majesty, desirous to show all possible attention to the privileges of the house of commons, and at the same time solicitous not to suffer the public justice of the kingdom to be eluded, had chosen to direct the said libel, and also copies of the examinations upon which Mr. Wilkes was apprehended and secured, to be laid before them."

THE ground which administration took in supporting the proceedings relating to Mr. Wilkes was, a proposition to censure a work as false, scandalous, and seditious, the merits of which were actually before a court of justice; and that very day Mr. Grenville proposed the following

^a Various reports were disseminated concerning this negotiation. The documents on which it chiefly rests, is the letter of lord Hardwicke to his son lord Royston, afterwards published.

resolution: "That the paper entitled the North Briton, No. 45. is a false, scandalous, and seditious libel against his majesty and both houses of parliament, manifestly tending to alienate the affections of the people from his majesty, to withdraw them from their obedience to the laws, and to excite them to traitorous insurrection." In supporting this motion, the friends of ministers expatiated on the nature and mischievous tendency of seditious libels, demonstrated the calumnious falsehoods of the work in question, contended that they were fitted to estrange the affections of the people from the king and legislature, and that therefore the author deserved the strongest marks of censure that could be passed by the house. Opposition, endeavouring to extenuate the offence of Mr. Wilkes, contended, that he had been already treated with such illegality and harshness as amounted to persecution; that the decisions of the court had already shown his treatment to have been oppressive; and that his offence, whatever might be its nature or heinousness, was now before the judicature of his country, whose judgment it did not become a branch of the legislature either to anticipate or to influence by interference.

THE resolution was carried by a great majority; and immediately after it was resolved that No. 45. of the North Briton should be burned by the hands of the common hangman; and the lords, in a conference, agreed to the resolution, and to the sentence. On the 26th of November both houses joined in an address, expressing their indignation at the contumely with which his majesty was treated in the libel, and at the outrage which had been offered to every branch of the legislature. The next question relative to Mr. Wilkes was, the extent of parliamentary privilege. Ministry moved, that *the privilege of parliament does not extend to seditious libels*. Opposition argued, that many authorities in law, particularly the late decision in the court of common pleas, established the extension of parliamentary privilege to every case, except treason, felony, and breach of the peace. Mr. Pitt declared his abhorrence of the paper in question to be as great as any man's, "but (said he) let the author be punished in due course of law, according to the

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against
Wilkes.

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" amount of his guilt. Do not let us sacrifice the privileges of parliament, and subject every man to the danger of imprisonment who may happen to write against ministry. A member of parliament possesses the privilege claimed by Mr. Wilkes, and admitted by the court of common pleas; but if an offender wished to shelter himself under his privileges, the house, from its regard to justice, would deliver him up to prosecution." The friends of ministry, in reply to the argument, from legal authorities endeavoured to prove, that a libel was a much more hurtful offence than what are usually called breaches of the peace, and even than several species of felony. The privilege of parliament was intended merely to prevent a member from being distracted in his attention to national business, by litigations concerning his private property, but not to prove a protection for crimes. The resolution, after undergoing a very violent contest, was passed, and carried also in the house of lords. During these proceedings, a personal altercation between Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Martin, member for Camelford, produced a duel, in which Mr. Wilkes was wounded; and the house delayed farther proceedings until he should be able to attend.

1764.

IN the christmas vacation he retired into France. On the 19th of January 1764, the last adjourned day for farther proceedings against him, the house received certificates from French surgeons, that, from his wound, he was unable to return to England; but, conceiving this excuse to be an unfounded pretence,^b they proceeded with his case. On the 29th of January it was proposed, " That John Wilkes, esq. member for Aylesbury, being guilty of writing and publishing the North Briton, be expelled this house." In this debate, opposition was very moderate; the evidence was so unquestionable, that the most patriotic members could not conscientiously support the cause of Wilkes. Disapprobation of the proceedings of ministry as illegal and violent, was not incompatible with a thorough conviction of the wickedness of the paper in question, and the unfitness of the author to hold a place in the house of

^b He had gone to Paris after his wound; and his return thence, it was apprehended, could not be more impracticable than his journey thither.

commons; the question was therefore carried in the affirmative, and Mr. Wilkes was expelled the house.

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He is expelled the house.

THE same day that he was deprived of his seat in the assembly of the commons, he underwent an accusation from the peers. He had written,^c and privately dispersed, a book, entitled, *An Essay on Woman*, being a burlesque on Pope's *Essay on Man*, and consisting of obscene and blasphemous ribaldry. To this production he had subjoined notes, stated in the title page to be written by bishop Warburton, so eminent for learning and virtue. The man who first declared his abhorrence of such an offence against decency and piety, was the *earl of Sandwich*. His lordship had recently been extremely intimate with Mr. Wilkes, and had at the very time thoroughly established a character, of which holiness and virtue were not constituents; but he was extremely active in procuring evidence to fix this publication upon Mr. Wilkes, in order to bring to condign punishment the violator of morality and religion.^d His own habits of intercourse,^e and sources of information, peculiarly fitting his lordship for bringing such flagitiousness to light, he procured a copy of the work, and complained of it in the house of peers, as a flagrant outrage against the most sacred duties both to God and man. The peers, on the slightest inspection, saw that it was an infamous performance; and, in the attack upon the venerable, excellent, and illustrious prelate, an evident breach of the privileges of the lords; they therefore addressed his majesty to give directions for prosecuting the author. He was accordingly indicted for blasphemy, while the proceedings respecting the libel were pending; and, on the 21st of February, tried before lord Mansfield, for republishing the *North Briton*, with notes; and on the same day, for printing and publishing the *Essay on Woman*. Not returning to receive sentence, he

^c I am aware that the *Essay on Woman* has been ascribed to a different author; but the proof then adduced fixed it on Mr. Wilkes.

^d The earl of Chesterfield, in a letter to his son, appears to think equal credit due to the patriotic commoner, and to the holy peer. "Happy (says he) is it for this nation, that God hath been pleased to raise up in Mr. Wilkes a patriotic defender of our rights and liberties, and in the earl of Sandwich so zealous a defender of our religion and morals."

^e The popular writings of the times on this occasion, applied to the peer a satirical character, taken from a very celebrated performance:

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Retires
into exile.

was outlawed ; the suits carried on against the two secretaries of course abated ; and Wilkes himself might have been forgotten, if another ministry had not rekindled the popular flame.

THE votaries of a favourite hypothesis endeavoured to make every fact and case bend to their theory. The people still considered Bute as the real director of affairs, and imputed to his arbitrary principles the acts of the Grenville administration, which they represented as unconstitutional and tyrannical. If considered impartially, the arrest by general warrant is found to be a mere adoption by this ministry, of the mode followed by all ministries since the revolution. From such a procedure, therefore, no inference can be justly drawn that their intentions were tyrannical ; but their conduct was certainly irregular, and was also very unnecessary. If, as a member of parliament, Mr. Wilkes was subject to any warrant for a libel, he was amenable to a special as well as a general warrant. To have arrested him in the legal way, would have been as easy and expeditious as in the illegal. Mr. Wilkes's conduct in itself was a gross violation of law, but to its cognizance the courts of law were fully competent. While it was before these tribunals, it did not appear consistent with either the justice of the minister to propose, or of parliament to adopt, measures that might tend to a prejudication of the case. Conviction must have ensued on such criminality, established by indubitable proofs ; and the house might have then proceeded with much greater propriety to censure or punish the author. The impartial historian, though he find in the prosecutors of Wilkes no designs or intentions hostile to constitutional liberty, must perceive, that a considerable part of their conduct was totally inconsistent with prudence, with the stability of their own power, and with the tranquillity of government. Wilkes had before been little known, except for his profligacy ; the ministers raised him to eminence ; discontent was before very great, and the proceedings against him made it spread with accelerated rapidity. Though not justly deemed tyrannical, the prosecution of Wilkes by the Grenville administration, was unwise at the time, and injurious in its consequences.

THOUGH Mr. Wilkes was himself retired from the political stage, questions resulting from his case continued to occupy parliament, and to agitate the public mind. Members of opposition now proposed the question of general warrants in an abstract form, merely as a point of constitutional law, without seeming to involve in it any particular case. On the 14th of February, sir William Meredith moved a resolution, stating, "that a general warrant for apprehending and seizing the authors, printers, and publishers of a seditious libel, together with their papers, is not warranted by law." Ministry conducted themselves with great dexterity concerning this question; for they kept aloof from the position itself, and did not support the legality of such warrants, "The house of commons," they said, "being only a part, and not the whole of the legislature, cannot declare law legislatively; and not being a court of judicature, cannot declare it judicially: the assumption of such a power would introduce confusion into the courts of law. The judges considered themselves as to be guided only by the whole legislature. If the commons were to declare the law, their declarations might be different from what the king and parliament had pronounced. In the present case, it would produce not only general confusion, but particular injustice. There was a bill of exemptions depending before the ordinary judges, on the alleged illegality of general warrants; and the proposed resolution would in a great degree prejudice the cause. It would condemn men who acted upon the most numerous precedents, and of the best times; men whose known characters, and the tenor of whose conduct, had secured them from every suspicion of an ill intention to liberty. Though the words of the resolution extended only to the case of libel, yet the spirit of it would apply to all cases whatsoever. Such warrants had often been productive of the greatest good, and had nipped in the bud the most dangerous conspiracies. If general warrants are illegal, await the determination of the courts; if the decisions of the courts are not satisfactory, declare the law by act of parliament."

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Question concerning general warrants.

Argument for them;

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them.

THE supporters of the motion argued on the illegality and oppressive tendency of the process by a general warrant. Such a mode left a discretionary power over the liberty of the subject; not only to magistrates, whose knowledge, wisdom, and value of their reputation, might moderate the exertion of their arbitrary authority; but to the inferior officers of justice, often the most ignorant and profligate of mankind. The argument from precedent could not justify what was contrary to law. Cases, it was admitted, might occur, in which necessity would justify general warrants; as in time of war and public danger, when issued against the persons and interests of the enemy, they might be requisite for the preservation of the country. Mr. Pitt, in a speech on the subject, acknowledged that he had signed two of them himself, though aware of their illegality, because he would risk his head for the public safety: but in the case of a libel, there was no such necessity; every purpose of public justice might be fully obtained by the regular process of law. The house of commons neither pretended to be the whole of the legislative body, nor a court of judicature; but it was their undoubted right, confirmed by clear and unequivocal precedent, to censure every illegal practice, not thereby declaring law, but admonishing courts of justice and executive officers to keep within the limits of law as already established.

MINISTERS proposed an amendment, stating the constant and uncensured practice of officers. They moved that the question, so amended, should be adjourned to that day four months; that is, should be actually dismissed; and a motion to that effect was carried by two hundred and thirty-four against two hundred and twenty.^f

WE have hitherto been considering acts of administration which appear to have resulted from their united counsels; we now come to measures, in which the lead

^f Among those who voted with opposition on the present occasion was general Conway, who was presently after dismissed from the command of a regiment, and other military as well as civil employments. This act was severely censured in the opposition writings of the time, and even by not a few connected with no party. This dismissal is the subject of several letters by Horace Walpole, who also wrote a pamphlet upon the subject, entitled, "An address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer;" which is published in his works.

was taken by Mr. Grenville himself, belonging peculiarly to his department, and deriving their nature and tendency from his character. Mr. Grenville was a man of a clear and sound understanding, of great parliamentary experience, indefatigable application, and extensive knowledge, especially in the laws of his country, in commerce, and in finance. He had adopted an opinion, that the resources of the country were in a very exhausted state; that therefore the chief business of a prime minister was to find out in what way the deficiencies might be supplied. His great object was, the improvement of the revenue without additional burdens on the country. With this view one part of his policy was, to restrain smuggling of every kind, that the established imports might be as productive as possible: in the execution of his schemes he was very active and successful; and farther, to promote his purpose, he had recourse to the aid of the officers of the navy. A number of small ships of war, with cutters and tenders, were stationed on the coasts of Britain and Ireland, and similar powers conferred on them with those usually given to revenue officers. Those regulations were a powerful restraint on contraband trade, and added greatly to the productiveness of the revenue. Having thus enlarged the products, he diminished expense by rigid economy. He inquired into abuses which wasted the public money, and by correcting them made great savings; in his bargains for the public with moneyed men, he procured very advantageous terms, and was a most frugal, faithful, and skilful steward to his country.

By these means he was able in 1764, only one year after the termination of so expensive a war, to come forward with a scheme of finance which precluded the necessity of additional taxes. One part of the debt was 1,800,000*l.* in exchequer bills, which were at a great discount. The bank contract was to be renewed; Mr. Grenville stipulated, that the bank should take 1,000,000*l.* of these bills for two years, at an interest reduced by one fourth; and, at the same time, should pay a fine on the renewal of the contract of 100,000*l.* The residue of the bills were renewed; and another floating debt of 2,000,000*l.* still remained; to its liquidation, the surplus of the sink-

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ville;

his finan-
cial
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ing fund was applied, and also 700,000*l.* the produce of French prizes taken before the declaration of war. The savings of unnecessary expenses, the increased productiveness of the revenue by the prevention of smuggling, added to the funds before established, precluded the necessity, not only of a new loan and taxes, but even of a lottery.

THE state of supply was laid before the commons on the 20th of March, and the friends of ministry justly gave it credit as a display of combined skill and economy in the administration of the revenue, and exulted in the effects which it produced; nor were their praises controverted by opposition in parliament. The plan was, however, strongly attacked in anti-ministerial publications, in which it was attempted to be proved, that the statements were fallacious, and the alleged savings frivolous; but the objections were chiefly founded upon hypotheses, while the arguments in favour of the minister were supported by authentic documents; and, indeed, an impartial reviewer of this part of Mr. Grenville's ministry, must allow him the praise due to a prudent and well informed financier.

Regulations for preventing smuggling.

To promote his favourite object, of increasing the productiveness of revenue, Mr. Grenville extended the collecting powers of naval officers to America and the West Indies. There was a clandestine trade carried on between the English, and Spanish colonies, to the great advantage of both, especially the former, and even of Great Britain herself; because through this channel British manufactures were introduced into the Spanish settlements, and the returns were made principally in gold and silver.^g Though this traffic was not contrary to the spirit of any act of parliament, yet the officers of the navy appointed to prevent smuggling, not having received definite instructions from home, put a stop to the intercourse however beneficial: they seized indiscriminately all the ships employed in this commerce, whether belonging to fellow subjects or to foreigners. The North Americans, who had found this trade extremely lucrative,

^g See Stedman's History of the American war, vol. i. p. 14.

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murmured loudly at the fatal check which it thus received ; and Mr. Grenville's laudable desire of increasing the revenue, being pursued too exclusively, produced measures which, though not very important in their financial operations, were followed by political consequences of the highest moment. He formed a plan to oblige the inhabitants of the American colonies to bear a share in the expense necessary for their protection, by paying taxes to be imposed by the British parliament. A distinction had obtained in these provinces, between duties on the importation and exportation of merchandise, and TAXES. Customs had been imposed upon certain enumerated goods, if carried to some other place instead of Great Britain ; and when specific articles, the produce of one colony, were to be exported to another, they paid a duty.^a To these imports, considering them merely as *regulations of trade*, and not as TAXES, the colonies had submitted. Mr. Grenville therefore proposed a deviation from the established practice, and the assertion of a claim, which involved in it very important questions, respecting not only general liberty, but also the constitutional freedom of a British subject. Intended by him merely as a scheme of finance upon old and established grounds, his project proposed a political change founded upon new principles, of which experience had afforded no means of ascertaining the operation and effects. It was a much more important and more complicated proposition than its author apprehended ; and a plan for making an inconsiderable addition to British revenue, eventually laid the foundation of one of the greatest and most momentous revolutions which history has to record.

Projects
respecting
America.

As a part of this innovating system, Mr. Grenville moved in parliament a bill for granting certain duties on goods in the British colonies, to support the government there, and encourage the trade to the sugar plantations ; and on the 6th of April, this proposition was passed into a law. He also proposed another to the following pur-

Innovating
system of
taxation in
the colo-
nies.

^a Rum, sugar, and molasses, for instance, imported from the West Indies to North America, paid a duty before they were shipped ; as did also tobacco and indigo, imported from the North American continent to any of the other plantations.

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port : " that towards further defraying the expense of " protecting and securing the colonies, it may be proper " to charge certain *stamp duties* in the colonies." He postponed, however, during this session the introduction of a bill founded on the last resolution, that the Americans might have time to offer a compensation for the revenue which such a tax might produce. The colonial assemblies during the war had been in the practice of issuing bills, which were made a legal tender for money : these had begun to be attended with great inconvenience, and to suffer very considerable depreciation. To remedy the evils, a law was proposed by Mr. Grenville, and passed by parliament, for preventing such bills as might be hereafter issued in any of his majesty's colonies or plantations in America, from being made legal tenders in payment of money. The restrictions on the clandestine trade had given great umbrage in North America ; the law obstructing their paper currency added to the dissatisfaction ; but the duties actually imposed upon merchandise, and the resolutions concerning the stamp duty, excited a loud clamour. The New Englanders were the first to investigate these measures. Conceiving the new laws to be part of a general plan for assuming a power not heretofore exercised by Britain over her American colonies, they immediately controverted the fundamental principle, and totally denied the right of a British parliament to levy in any form duties or taxes upon the colonies. The exercise (they said) of such an authority was a violation of their rights as freemen ; as colonists, possessing by their charters the power of taxing themselves for their own support and defence ; and as British subjects, who ought not to be taxed but by themselves or their representatives. These topics were the subjects of petitions sent over to the king, to the lords, and to the commons.

The New
England-
ers.

PLACED in a rigorous climate, and on a soil requiring active and persevering industry to render it productive, the New Englanders were strong, hardy, and capable of undergoing great labour and fatigue. Having many difficulties to overcome and dangers to encounter, they were formed to penetration, enterprise, and resolution. Their country, less bountiful than those of their southern neigh-

hours, rendered recourse to traffic necessary. The puritanism which they inherited from their forefathers,ⁱ with its concomitant hypocrisy, incorporated itself with their commercial conduct; and avarice is never keener than after a coalition with fanatical austerity, and never with more ardour uses the ministry of fraud, than when arrayed in the garb of sanctity. The traffic of New England, of a minute and detailed kind, less resembling the pursuit of an enlightened merchant than a petty shopkeeper, while it narrowed liberality, sharpened artifice. Inheriting a tinge of democratical republicanism, the people submitted with reluctance to the constitutional authority of a government in which monarchy made a considerable part, and spurned at the idea of yielding to what they conceived to be usurpation. Avarice being a prominent feature in their characters, they were peculiarly jealous of an apprehended usurpation, which was calculated to affect their purposes. As their sentiments and principles prompted them to oppose such attempts, their intelligent and bold character enabled them effectually to resist them. In the middle colonies, in which the temperature of the climate and fertility of the soil easily afforded the necessaries and accommodations of life, though active and industrious, the inhabitants were not equally hardy and enterprising; they were less austere in their manners, admitted luxury and refinement to a much greater degree than the colonists of the north, and were attached to a monarchical form of government. The southern colonies were dissipated, relaxed, and indolent; and therefore though little adapted to resistance themselves, were well fitted to receive impressions from more vigorous characters. The New Englanders were extremely active in diffusing their own sentiments through the provinces attached to the mother country; till, at length, the spirit of dissatisfaction became so prevalent, as to attract the notice and animadversions of the British government.

WHILE subjects so interesting and important were agitating the civilized parts of British America, government was disturbed by a desultory warfare with the

War with
the Indi-
ans,

ⁱ See the Introduction, p. 47.

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Indian savages. British settlers had impolitically neglected the means of gaining the affections and confidence of the natives. Seeing England so completely established, the Indians regretted that they had not been more active in supporting the French interest. The cordon of forts along the lakes trenched upon the hunting grounds, almost the sole resource of savage life; and they became apprehensive that British colonies would be planted in those woods from which they now derived their subsistence. In the midst of these apprehensions, a report was spread, that the American provinces had formed a scheme for extirpating the Indian tribes; though totally unfounded, this rumour was believed by the natives, and had no small share in inciting them to hostilities. A confederacy was formed, and a sudden attack made, during the harvest, on all our frontier settlements. Before the design was suspected, numbers of planters were surprised, and put to death, with every torture that savage ingenuity could devise; their effects were plundered, their houses burned, and their crops destroyed. The itinerant merchants, who, relying on the general peace, traded in the Indian country, were murdered, and their effects, valued at two hundred thousand pounds, plundered. The western frontiers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, were totally abandoned by the planters; the savages had surprised three of our forts, and were advancing fast to our principal garrison, fort Pitt. Informed of this alarming irruption, general Amherst sent a strong detachment against the Indians, under captain Dalzell. The savages, however, being apprised of his intentions, attacked the king's troops on every side, and Dalzell with great difficulty made his retreat to fort Detroit. A numerous body of Indians now surrounded fort Pitt, at which reinforcements were not yet arrived; the general sent to its relief a strong corps under colonel Bouquet. Informed of the march of this detachment, the Indians raised the siege, with a view to attack the English; and encountering Bouquet's troops, after a sharp contest, pretended to retreat, and drew their adversaries into a most dangerous ambuscade: the British, however, formed themselves into strong columns, and preserving the strictest order, encountered tomahawks

with fixed bayonets; and disciplined valour prevailing over savage impetuosity, they repulsed the enemy. The Indians had again recourse to ambuscade, to which their country is so peculiarly favourable. Our commander wished to bring them to a close engagement; but the enemy with skilful dexterity eluded battle. In his attempts to effect his purpose, Bouquet was drawn into a defile, in which he was extremely distressed for want of water, and saw that, if he were not able to bring the Indians to regular action, his troops must moulder away for want of provisions. The enemy had increased in confidence from their late success; and the colonel perceiving this boldness, contrived the following stratagem for drawing them into battle. The British troops were posted on an eminence, while two companies were stationed in more advanced situations. These he ordered to fall within the circle as if retreating, while the other two were drawn up so as to appear to cover that retreat. The first two companies moved behind a projecting part of the hill, so as not to be perceived by the enemy. The savages, leaving their woods, attacked the two companies that were nearest them; but while they pressed forward, believing themselves sure of victory, the two that had made the feigned retreat rushed on, and attacked them in the flank, while the others charged them in front. The savages were defeated and routed; and the British troops arriving at fort Pitt, secured that important post. The savages now made an attack upon Niagara, and carried four hundred men in canoes across lake Erie; but these were defeated by an English schooner.

GENERAL AMHERST, aware that, though the disciplined force of Britain must ultimately triumph over savage ferocity, the inroads of the Indians was a great interruption to colonial prosperity, made such proposals as, by the great influence of sir William Johnson, were accepted by the principal tribes; and the rest, sensible that they were no longer able to contend with the British, also sought and obtained peace.

At home, little happened of sufficient importance to be a subject of history, except the proceedings regarding Mr. Wilkes, already mentioned. The cyder tax, how-

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ever, occasioned a number of meetings and resolutions, and some riots. The crop had been very deficient, and the dearness of provisions caused great discontent; which was increased by the representations of demagogues, imputing the scarcity in a considerable degree to the influx of Scotchmen,^k whom, it was asserted, lord Bute had brought hither to eat the fruits of England. The dissatisfaction in many places rose to tumult. The scarcity also contributed to a different evil, the prevalence of robberies to a very alarming degree: this mischief was farther increased by the discharge of numbers of soldiers and sailors at the peace, who had not since that time got into a regular employment: indeed at no time were felonies more pregnant, daring, and atrocious.

Abuses in
mad
houses.

DURING this year the legislature was informed, that very shameful practices prevailed in private mad houses. Committees of both houses inquired into the subject, and found that these pretended receptacles for lunatics were very frequently converted into prisons for the confinement, by the authority of private individuals, of persons who had done nothing offensive to the laws of their country; wives, who interrupted the debaucheries of their husbands; parents, who chose to manage their own affairs, without implicitly submitting to their children; children, sisters, and wards, who did not implicitly yield to parents, brothers, and guardians; in short, whoever opposed the will of relations assuming despotic power. Individuals, invested with no authority by the law of the land, arrogated to themselves a power not granted by our laws to any part of the executive government. They committed fellow subjects to goal without an examination; they suspended by their sole will and authority the *habeas corpus* act; and in effect established *bastilles* in Britain. It was found, that the keepers acknowledged this absolute power of individuals; and, without any enquiry, received whomsoever their *lettres de cachet* chose to send to confinement.

^k The poet Churchill was peculiarly zealous and successful in impressing these ideas on those credulous readers who would receive the colourings of fancy for authentic truth. His writings were highly prized by critics who had not sufficient discrimination to perceive the difference between the acrimony of malignant invective and the strength of well-founded satire; who, to use the language of Johnson concerning another inciter of disaffection, "mistook the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow."

They admitted and detained persons in their perfect senses, requiring nothing farther than to be paid for their maintenance. The legislature, having investigated this evil and discovered its extent, made regulations to prevent its continuance or renewal.

DURING this year, two events took place, which were important to the royal family, and consequently to the country. The hereditary prince of Brunswick, who had so eminently distinguished himself in the war, was in January married to the princess Augusta, eldest sister of the king. The bishopric of Osnaburg, which was alternately in the gift of the houses of Hanover and Saxony, becoming vacant, and it being king George's turn, as elector of Hanover, to present, was bestowed upon the infant prince Frederic, second son to their majesties.

BEFORE we revert to the internal and colonial contests which agitated the first portion of the present reign, it seems proper to take a short review of the state of Europe, especially of those parts of it whose acts must always be important to Great Britain.

THE alliance between France and Austria had been so far from answering its purpose, that its consequences had left both the contracting parties in an exhausted and depressed state. The family compact between France and Spain, which was intended to exalt, had humbled both kingdoms. In France, internal dissatisfaction interrupted the measures of government for repairing the losses sustained by the war. The immense expenditure of France, both for herself and her allies, had involved her in the greatest pecuniary difficulties, and obliged government to levy very heavy taxes. The parliament of Paris objected to some of the new financial decrees; and force being employed to reduce them to compliance, they resigned their offices. Various representations were made to the king, to justify their conduct. The duke of Fitz-james, governor of Languedoc, imprisoned some refractory members of the parliament of Thoulouse. As a customary mode of procedure with the executorial officers of the king of France, this act might indeed raise indignation, but could not excite surprise; the proceedings of the parliament, however, in these circumstances were unusual, and manifested a devia-

State of
Europe.

France.

Rising
spirit of
freedom

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tion from the spirit by which that country had been actuated ever since the establishment of the house of Bourbon. The parliament of Thoulouse impeached the duke, gave orders for the arrest of his person and the sequestration of his estates, and referred the cause to the cognisance of the parliament of Paris, as the supreme court of judicature. That body, accepting the appeal, ordered their president to request the king's presence in the examination. The king replied, that, as the duke of Fitz-james represented his person, he would himself take cognisance of the cause. To this intimation the parliament returned a very strong remonstrance. The death of Fitz-james prevented the dispute coming to issue, but the spirit of resentment which had manifested itself did not evaporate.

Austria.

AUSTRIA had concluded a peace with the king of Prussia a few months after the treaty of Fontainbleau; she had for ever renounced her claim to Silesia, and by her stipulations acknowledged herself to have totally failed in the purposes for which she had undertaken the war. By her ambitious projects she had, during the contest, incurred a debt amounting to twenty-five millions sterling; which was to her an enormous sum. The counsels of her able minister, Kaunitz, were necessarily occupied in devising means for the diminution of this burden. One important object she obtained by the treaty of Hubertsburg, in the express consent of the king of Prussia to the archduke Joseph, eldest son and heir of the emperor and empress queen, being chosen king of the Romans, and the election took place in April 1764.

Prussia.

THE king of Prussia, though he had overcome all his enemies, and dictated the terms of peace, equally able in every department, had been so provident, that AT THE END OF THE WAR HE HAD NOT CONTRACTED A SHILLING OF DEBT, and had even one year's revenue in his treasury.¹ Frederick, though now at peace, did not relax; he employed himself in cultivating the advantages of tranquillity, reviving industry, encouraging agriculture and

¹ See Gillies's *Frederic*, p. 364.

commerce, improving his revenue, and rendering his country flourishing. CHAP. IV.

RUSSIA, though advancing more slowly toward civilization than the ardent genius of czar Peter had conceived, was rapidly increasing in the solid constituents of power. Her military force, arising from such extensive resources, was extremely strong. In hostilities she had commonly been subsidized as an auxiliary, instead of contributing as a principal; hence the wars in which she had been engaged exercised her soldiers without exhausting her finances. Her commerce was extending on every side; not only from her pursuing the schemes of Peter, but from the policy of other countries. During the present century, more than at any preceding period, the nations of Europe had sought maritime strength. Russia was the grand magazine of naval stores: these exports increased her wealth; intercourse with the traders enlarged her commercial ideas, and more strongly impressed on her the importance of maritime force. Her marine was rapidly advancing; and from her various resources she had the greatest influence with nations with which she was nearly connected. Such was the state of Russia when the sceptre fell into the hands of a princess thoroughly qualified by understanding and temper to cultivate the productiveness of the country, improve and multiply its resources, and call them forth to beneficial action. The empress Catharine, in the beginning of her reign, appeared so much occupied with her own dominions, as to attend little to foreign transactions; and merely to wish to be on terms of peace and amity with her neighbours, without interfering in any of their contests or concerns. She had made a defensive alliance with the king of Prussia, without embroiling herself with Austria; she was on amicable terms with Sweden and Denmark; she had kept totally aloof from the disputes of the maritime powers, and professed the highest regard for all the belligerent parties, and the greatest satisfaction when their wars were at an end. But at length an event took place, which showed that her ambitious character was destined to display itself in other countries as well as Russia. On the 5th of October 1763, Augustus, elector of Saxony and king of Poland, died; and his son, the young elector,

1764.
Russia.

Catharine.

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offered himself as candidate for the throne. The king of Prussia, very anxious to prevent the crown of Poland from becoming hereditary in the house of Saxony, opposed the choice of its present head. The Russian empress joined Frederic in his opposition to the house of Saxony, and recommended count Poniatowsky, a Pole by birth, representative of a powerful and illustrious family, and himself a man of great virtues and accomplishments; and, in order to strengthen his interests she sent a powerful army into Poland. Austria, France, and Spain, connected with the house of Saxony, wished success to the elector, but had neither the disposition nor power to employ force in his favour. Branitzky and Radzivil, two Polish chieftains of great power and authority, endeavoured to oppose Poniatowsky, but were defeated, and driven out of Poland; and Poniatowsky was, on the 7th of September 1764, elected, by the title of Stanislaus II. king of Poland.

IN southern Europe, a war had subsisted for upwards of twenty years between the republic of Genoa and the inhabitants of Corsica. The islanders had been at first headed by a German adventurer, whom, trusting to his air-built promises of interesting the great powers in their favour, they chose king, by the title of Theodore king of Corsica. Finding him, however, not to possess the power and influence to which he had pretended, they compelled him to abdicate the throne and retire into banishment. The Corsicans, after this event, chose a native chieftain, named Giacinto Paoli, general of their armies, and president of their councils; and under this commander they were superior to the Genoese troops. After a contest of many years, the senate of Genoa applied to the most christian king for assistance; and in August 1764, a convention was signed between the French and Genoese, by which the king of France guaranteed the island to Genoa, and promised to send a naval and military force to assist in its reduction. The Corsicans applied to the courts of Vienna and London, to mediate for them with the French monarch; but nothing was done in their behalf, and the French troops took possession of the principal fortresses of Corsica.

THE British parliament met on the 10th of January 1765. The question of general warrants was early in the season, brought again before the house, in a new form ; and on the 29th, underwent a very able discussion, in which many ingenious arguments were brought forward on both sides, new rather in detail and illustration than in principle. The speakers of opposition showed the evils which might arise from general warrants in a greater multiplicity of lights than before, and administration enlarged more than formerly on the impropriety of the interposition of the house of commons in declaring the law of the land : but the real grounds of argument on both sides were and must have been the same, as the subject had been so completely debated in the preceding year. After a very warm contest, it was dismissed by the previous question.

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1765.
Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

General
warrants.

THE deliberations of parliament were now turned towards America. Both the justice and expediency of taxation underwent a discussion, on much more comprehensive principles than in the former year, when the probable efficiency of the tax appeared to be the sole consideration. The petitions and manifestos from the American colonies, denying the right of the British parliament to tax them, being read, the minister submitted the question to the house. A more important subject of discussion had rarely been presented to the British parliament. It was a question, the extent and consequences of which its proposer had by no means digested ; it involved the general objects of colonization, the means by which those were to be affected, and the particular constitution, state, and sentiments of the British colonies. In considering this subject, many, by arguing from the practice of parent countries and their plantations in ancient times, were led to very faulty conclusions respecting the question between Britain and her colonies. The motives for colonization have been extremely different in different ages, countries, and circumstances ; and from that dissimilitude arose a proportionate diversity of relation and reciprocal interest between the mother country and the plantations. Small states, with confined territories and an increasing population, were frequently obliged to send the surplus of

Plan of tax-
ing Ameri-
ca.

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their inhabitants in quest of new settlements. This was the cause of colonial establishments from Phenicia, and from Greece; whose plantations in Asia, Africa, Italy, and elsewhere, were from their nature not dependent on the parent country. They often, indeed, retained a close intercourse with each other, from identity of extraction and language, and similarity of manners and government; but the parent country was far from claiming any authority over its emigrated descendants. This kind of colony resembled the children of a family setting out to seek their fortunes abroad, because they had no means of subsistence at home; settling themselves in a foreign country, subsisted and protected by their own efforts; consequently no longer under the command of the parents, whatever their affection might be for them and their brethren. The colonies of the Romans were planted from other causes, and were, in consequence, on a very different footing. The state, increasing at home in population, and abroad in territories, found conquered countries drained of inhabitants by long wars, but abounding in cultivated land. They therefore sent settlers from Rome^m to occupy the lands, which might otherwise have been in a great measure waste from the reduced population. Here the mother country offered comfortable subsistence to her offspring for their industry, and protection for their allegiance. The Roman colonists were not adventurers sent to seek their fortunes with the "world all before them," but children settled by parents in farms entirely dependent on themselves: and these plantations were, and must have been, part of the Roman dominions. Advocates for the taxation of the British colonies, in writings and speeches, quoted the subjection of the Roman plantations; advocates against that system quoted the independence of the Grecian emigrations; although, in reality, neither example would apply. Modern colonies have neither, like those from Greece, been establishments originating in necessary separation, and therefore in their nature independent; nor, like those of the Romans, springing from specific donative within the jurisdiction of the donor, and there-

^m Smith on Colonies, Wealth of Nations, vol. ii. p. 346.

fore in their nature dependent. They have been settlements formed for the purposes of immediate or eventual gain; and they proposed the accession of resources to the parent country. The great and leading inquiry was, how are these colonies to be rendered most beneficial to a state so circumstanced as their parent country? The plans of different European nations in the government of their colonies, varied according to the general policy of the parent country, the circumstances of the settlements, and the character of particular administrations. The constitution of the American colonies was similar to the polity of Britain, in establishing provisions for the security of property, liberty, and life; they therefore possessed the right of taxing themselves by their representatives. This was a privilege which the Americans thought inherent in them as British subjects, and confirmed by charters admitted by the mother country: its practical enjoyment constituted a great part of their comfort and happiness; and, teaching them to value themselves and their respective colonies, inspired those exertions which rendered them so beneficial to the British empire. The actual benefits that accrued to England from her colonies, consisted in the increase of people, as the means of security and productiveness were augmented; and in the vast and rapidly growing accession to our trade,^a to supply the wants of the multiplying colonies. Commercial benefits were the objects of the plantations; the question, therefore, to be considered simply was, how are these advantages to be most effectually promoted, insured, and improved? It was a mere question of EXPEDIENCY, requiring no metaphysical disquisitions about abstract right. Experience showed that

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Principles
and system
of British
coloniza-
t. n.

^a This was sir Robert Walpole's view of the subject, declared when, as we have already observed, he was expressing his objections to taxing America. As his opinion was much quoted during the discussion before us, it may not be foreign to our purpose to repeat it in his own words: "I will leave the taxation of America," said he, "for some of my successors, who may have more courage than I have, and be less a friend to commerce than I am. It has been a maxim with me, during my administration, to encourage the trade of the American colonies in the utmost latitude; nay, it has been necessary to pass over some irregularities in their trade with Europe; for, by encouraging them to an extensive growing foreign commerce, if they gain 500,000*l.*, I am convinced, that in two years afterwards, full 250,000*l.* of their gain will be in his majesty's exchequer, by the labour and product of this kingdom; as immense quantities of every kind of our manufactures go thither; and as they increase in their foreign American trade, more of our produce will be wanted. This is taxing them more agreeably to their own constitution and to ours."

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our gains had been very considerable, and acquired without murmur or dispute, by the old plan, of profiting from their commerce, and demands for our productions: wisdom had now to determine, whether an adherence to a system of experienced benefit daily increasing, or the adoption of new schemes of doubtful operation and certain opposition was most likely to continue and extend that benefit for which colonies were established.

Bill for im-
posing
stamp
duties.

THE British minister preferred the untried theory to the essayed plan; and stated to parliament, that having postponed his scheme of taxation till this session, expecting that the colonies would have offered an equivalent, instead of a compensation, they had sent remonstrances. On the 7th of February 1765, he opened his system to the commons, and in a committee moved fifty-five resolutions for imposing *stamp duties* on certain papers and documents used in the colonies, and introduced a bill grounded upon the propositions.

Argu-
ments for,

Of the two parties which opposed government, the duke of Newcastle's was the more strenuous in combating the *stamp act*. The principal leaders among the whig party in the house of commons, were general Conway and Mr. Dowdeswell. Ministry had now acquired a very powerful auxiliary in the brilliant ingenuity of Mr. Charles Townshend, who had lately come over to their side. The supporters of British taxation asserted, that the colonies had been planted by our care, and nourished by our indulgence; and that as America had been the cause of great expense, it was but reasonable that she should contribute toward the general demands of the empire, as a part of which she was protected. The British legislature (they said) had a right to enact laws for every settlement within the British territories. The Americans, though not nominally, were really represented in the British parliament, and thus were on a footing with many individuals and bodies of Britons, who, having ostensibly no vote in the election of members, were equally included in the provisions of the legislature. The British finances were exhausted by a war begun for the security of the colonies; it was therefore not only equitable that they should contribute, but extremely ungrateful in them to refuse. The

nation had contracted an immense debt to give them protection; the navigation act, that palladium of British commerce, had been relaxed in their favour; in short, Britain had treated them as favourite children.

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THE arguments of the opposers of the *stamp act* were resolved into two heads: the right of Britain to tax America, and the expediency of exercising that right. The sovereign claim of taxation proposed by the pending bill, was totally inconsistent with every principle of freedom; it would undo the security of property, and was contrary to the rights of British subjects. The perfection of the representative system is, that the delegate is placed in the same situation as the constituent, and is bound himself by the laws which he has a share in enacting. In Great Britain, every individual may be said to be virtually represented; as every law and impost extends equally to those who have, as to those who have not votes. The Americans were not even virtually represented, and so far were members of the British parliament from being interested in securing the property of the Americans, that, if the right of taxation were admitted, by increasing the burdens of the colonies, they would relieve their own. Such were the arguments used against the right of taxation. On the ground of expediency it was urged, that from the established system we had denied very great benefits, commercial and financial; that the willing contributions of the colonies in demands for our commodities, though circuitously, increased our revenue much more than any direct impost would augment it, since it was already manifest that they would very unwillingly pay. The particular regulations of the act itself also underwent a severe discussion. But, whatever arguments might be forcibly used against taxation as a political system, the stamp act itself, merely as a measure of finance, was liable to little objection. The subjects and duties were extremely clear and definite, so as to preclude arbitrary exactions; simple and practicable in its operations, it would require little expense in the collection; and equitable in its subject, it would fall most heavily on those who were ablest to bear its burden. It was likely to be productive, through the increase of commerce, and conse-

and against
the stamp
act.

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Is passed
into a law.

Effects of
the new
system in
America.

quently of engagements subject to the duty. It bore the character of its author, skilful in finance, but not profound in legislative politics. The bill was carried through both houses by a great majority; and, on the 22d of March, passing into a law, became an important epoch in the history of the present reign. The arguments on both sides in parliament were repeated, and enlarged upon in the political writings of the times. Opponents to government represented the act as not only iniquitous in itself, but as part of the general arbitrary system of lord Bute, whose counsels they conceived to have still a direction in government. According to their account, the court intended, by subduing the liberties of America, to prepare the way for overturning the constitution of England. These allegations, little as they were justified by facts, were very generally believed by persons already disposed to impute evil designs to the executive government.

THE American agents were not slow in transmitting to their respective colonies an account of the stamp act, the opposition that it encountered in parliament, and the dissatisfaction which prevailed in England. Prepossessed, as the colonies were, with a notion that the British government entertained arbitrary designs, they now conceived that America, thus taxed without her consent, was intended, for slavery; and they resolved on a vigorous resistance.* They saw powerful opposition in parliament, and displeasure throughout the nation; they, therefore, entertained hopes that parliamentary ability, anti-ministerial publications, and popular clamour, might bring about a repeal; and they were aware that a ferment in the provinces would powerfully promote such a measure. The leaders of all the colonies bestirred themselves to excite the indignation of the people; they published in pamphlets, and circulated in newspapers, arguments against the justice and expediency of taxation, and represented it as the forerunner of slavery. The provincial assembly which first met after the promulgation of the stamp act, was the assembly of Virginia; a colony particularly distinguished for loyalty to the sovereign, and attachment to the mother

* See Stedman's History of the American War, vol. i. p. 29.

country and the English constitution. Virginia, indeed, was more remarkable for a sympathy of sentiment with Britain than any of the other provinces, and had received the impression so prevalent in England from the commencement of lord Bute's administration, that the constitution was in danger: and here commenced provincial opposition to taxation by the British parliament. The assembly having met on the 29th of May, after a very warm debate, passed resolutions disavowing the right of the British parliament, or of any other body than the assembly of Virginia, to legislate for that colony. The grounds of the disavowal, however, implied their attachment to the British constitution: they rested their claims on their RIGHTS AS BRITISH SUBJECTS, declared and confirmed by their charters. The assemblies of the other colonies adopted similar resolutions against the stamp act, which they all concurred in voting to be a most unconstitutional law, and a violation of their rights. The assembly of Massachusetts bay had, in the preceding year, taken the lead in denying to the British parliament the right of taxation; and now, seeing that the other states were severally strenuous in the opposition, projected a general concert among the colonies. For this purpose they formed a resolution, declaring the expediency of holding a congress, to consist of deputies from the several assemblies, in order to consult on the common grievances under which the colonies laboured from the late acts of parliament, and frame and prepare a general petition, with addresses, to the king and queen, and to both houses. Letters sent to the different assemblies communicated this resolution, and invited the other provinces to meet in congress at New York on the 12th of October. Such of the colonial assemblies as met before this period, acceded to the proposition, and nominated deputies; but though a great ferment arose through America, yet it did not break out into actual tumult till autumn. The people then threatened to discontinue the use of British manufactures until the stamp act should be repealed: yet the British minister meanwhile acted in such a way as to show that he had not apprehensions of any serious or important opposition to the execution of his financial scheme. He

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Annexa-
tion of the
Isle of Man
to the
crown.

had formed no measure to enforce its operation; from his conduct, it was evident that he considered it as merely a tax, which, though it might be somewhat unpopular before it was perfectly understood, would soon cease to be a subject of complaint. He proceeded, therefore, in his favourite pursuit for the good of the revenue.

MR. GRENVILLE found that the Isle of Man, from its central situation, and its adjacency to such a line of coast, was a great receptacle for smugglers; an evil which could not be thoroughly prevented under its existing government, as the sovereignty was not vested in the crown, but in a British subject. It had originally belonged to the family of Derby; and, by the affiance of a daughter of that house to the family of Athol, had descended to the dukes of Athol. Mr. Grenville proposed a bill for annexing the sovereignty to the crown of England, leaving to the duke the estates which he possessed in the island, and indemnifying^p him for the rights that he was required to relinquish. The bill was passed on the 10th of May, and followed by laws for preventing illicit trade.

SEVERAL causes now combined to weaken and distress administration. The stamp act was very unpopular in its principle, and still more obnoxious from the apprehensions that were entertained of its effects. The threats of the Americans to abstain from the use of British manufactures, caused a great alarm among manufacturers, merchants, and ship owners; and this alarm naturally spread among all the mechanics and labourers dependent on those three classes. While afraid that they would be deprived of work, they had another subject for dissatisfaction in the scarcity of bread, and high price of provisions; evils to which they were exposed during the whole of this year, and which created great discontent and

^p The terms granted to the duke of Athol were 70,000*l.* besides a pension for life to himself and to the duchess. As the bargain, on the part of his grace, was a compulsory sacrifice to the good of the state, on every principle of justice between sovereign and subject, he ought to have received very full indemnification. It was alleged by the duke's friends, that the compensation was not adequate. His son and successor, the present duke, having afterwards personally examined and inspected the state and resources of the island, and the advantages of which his family had been deprived, applied for a modification and amendment of the present bargain; but this belongs to a much more advanced period of the history.

clamour. Although the dearness of these necessary articles could not justly be attributed to ministry, yet by the populace it was charged to their account.

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WITH these causes of popular discontent, a measure relating to the royal family cooperated in accelerating the downfall of the Grenville administration.

TOWARD the close of this session, the king having been indisposed, a very great alarm took place, from the general affection with which his majesty's virtues were regarded, and also on considering the long minority which must have taken place if the termination had been fatal. The king, on his recovery, having gone to the house, in his speech took notice of his illness; and said, "that, though not attended with danger, it had led him to reflect on the state in which his family and country would be left, should it please heaven to put a period to his life while his successor was of tender years. For that reason, he recommended to parliament to make such provision as would be necessary, should any of his children succeed to the throne before they respectively attained the age of eighteen years;^q and proposed to their consideration, to empower him to appoint, by instruments in writing under his sign manual, either the queen, or any other person of the royal family usually residing in Great Britain, to be the guardian of the person of such successor, and the regent of these kingdoms, until such successor should attain the age of eighteen years, subject to the same restriction as had been provided by a regency act which had been passed on the death of the late prince of Wales." A bill was proposed in the house of lords, in consequence of his majesty's recommendation, that the council of regency should consist of the dukes of York and Gloucester, his majesty's brothers; the duke of Cumberland, his uncle; princes Henry Frederic and Frederic William, the king's two youngest brothers; and the chief officers of state for the time being. A question arose in the house, who are the royal family? The law lords explained it to be, the descendants of George II.; ministry acquiesced; and the bill passed the

Indisposition of the king.

On his recovery he recommends a provision for an eventual minority

^q See his majesty's speech, State Papers, 1765.
Late duke of Cumberland.

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Regency
bill.

house of lords. According to this interpretation, no one could be named regent, except the queen, or some one sprung from George II.; her royal highness the princess dowager of Wales, therefore, was not included. In the house of commons this omission was construed to be an indignity to her royal highness; and a motion was made, that the name of the princess should be inserted immediately after the name of the queen. This amendment being admitted, the bill was returned to the peers, and so it passed into a law.

THE administration having never been popular, was now become very obnoxious; and temporary and incidental distresses were imputed to their misconduct and evil designs. Complaints had for several months prevailed among the silk weavers, that their employment had been greatly injured by the encouragement bestowed on French manufactures. Near the close of the session, their murmurs rose to tumultuous expostulation; and in numerous bodies they surrounded the palace and the houses of parliament, and presented a petition for the redress of their grievances. A mob once collected, from whatever cause, rarely confines itself to just, legal, and constitutional operations; these persons therefore proceeding to various outrages, were at length repressed by the interference of the military, who were called in to assist the civil power in the reestablishment of order and tranquillity. Inimical to ministry, great numbers of the people and some of the popular leaders ascribed the ground of complaint to their misrule, and severely censured the means that were necessarily employed for the suppression of the disorders.

OTHER circumstances now cooperated with the popular enmity to administration. The cabinet had evidently lost the favour and confidence of the sovereign. The framers and supporters of the hypothesis concerning the secret supremacy of lord Bute, ascribed the declension and decay of their influence to the suggestions of the alleged favourite. According to this theory, Mr. Grenville and the duke of Bedford had not been such subservient tools to what was stiled the interior cabinet or secret junto, as was expected and required, and had frequently thwarted the

sovereign and his private friends and counsellors both in measures and appointments. The popular party asserted the omission of the princess dowager's name in the first bill of regency, to have been regarded by the court as an intended insult, and as such, to have been resented. But it has never been PROVED that lord Bute retained the alleged power and influence; and therefore no conclusion founded on such a supposition can be admitted as historical truth. That the king might be more attached to some individuals than to others, independently of their political qualifications, is no less probable, than that a sovereign should have the affections of another man. It is equally natural and allowable, that a monarch should wish to promote the interests and aggrandisement of the objects of his attachment, in preference to indifferent persons. The duty of his situation precludes not the bestowal on his friends of offices of honour or emolument, for which they may be respectively qualified. In the many departments of executive service, there are offices which do not require an equal degree of ability and effort as others. Places of high trust a patriotic sovereign will bestow, to the utmost of his power, on the fittest that can be found for promoting the public benefit; but there are many other subordinate appointments which, without detriment to the public good, may be given according to private favour. Agreeably to the principle and rule which directed his choice of ministers from the beginning, the king chose his chief official counsellors; but some offices of less importance he was willing to bestow according to his own predilection. It appears, that after the duke of Bedford had firmly established himself and his partisans, one of his chief objects was to extend his own patronage by donatives to his creatures; that he strongly thwarted his royal master;^a and that the other chief members of the cabinet joined in his unaccommodating and refractory opposition. Hence was thought to be derived their procedure in the regency bill; and at the close of the session, ministers possessed no more favour

^a See Life of lord Chatham; History of the late Minority; and Junius's Letter to the Duke of Bedford. "After two years submission (says Junius) you thought you had collected a strength sufficient to control his influence, and that it was your turn to be a tyrant, because you had been a slave."

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Dismissal
of the
Grenville
administra-
tion.

with the king, than they had enjoyed with the people from the commencement of their administration. Various conferences took place between the chief ministers and the sovereign, respecting their continuance in office; at length, according to general and uncontradicted report, the duke of Bedford presumed to use such language to his sovereign, as could not possibly be tolerated;^t and, as his colleagues adhered to the president of the council, the administration was dismissed.

MR. GEORGE GRENVILLE'S ministry has eventually proved a very important era in the history of this reign. He himself was a man of good understanding and upright intentions; possessing, however, that species and degree of ability which may be of great public service in the ordinary course of affairs, he by no means rose to that genius which can adapt its exertions to situations untried.^u Besides, the new circumstances which Mr. Grenville encountered, were of his own creation: he assumed an hypothesis, that the country was so much exhausted, as not to have the means of adequate revenue without a new source; but his theory was demonstrably erroneous: such a revenue was raised as, exclusive of America, and during the continuance of peace, annually reduced the national debt. Industrious as Mr. Grenville showed himself in his inquiries, and accurate in financial calculations, as a politician he proved himself not equal to the situation in which he was placed. His projects to produce a partial increase of revenue drove the colonies to disaffection, and generated a fatal political change, without obtaining the revenue which he sought, and which might have accrued circuitously to the country if he had left the subject untouched. Mr. Grenville has been charged with being the tool of lord Bute to establish absolute power; but his conduct affords no ground to justify the imputation of unconstitutional views. The proceedings respecting Wilkes were rash and precipitate, but interfered no more with liberty, than the measures of every minister had done since the revolution. His schemes of finance, on which, including

^t See political writings of 1765, *passim*; also Junius's Letter to the Duke of Bedford in a note. ^u See the admirable character of Grenville, drawn by Mr. Burke, in his speech on American taxation,

American taxation, the merits of his ministerial character rest, display an industrious man, of official habits and experience, conversant in details, without rising to the general principles of political economy; but neither in their plan nor execution do they manifest arbitrary intentions. In his acts he did not conceive himself to be violating the rights of British subjects; and in his measures for the operation of his acts, he showed no intention nor disposition to give them effect by force. Authentic history is not justified in exhibiting him as the promoter of arbitrary power; but the reviewer of his administration, allowing him the credit of an upright public steward, will discern that he was not a consummate statesman, and must regret that political measures most fatal to this country originated in the ministerial projects of Mr. George Grenville.

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His majesty continues to desire a ministry unconnected with party politics.—Applies through lord Bute to Mr. Pitt for that purpose—Mr. Pitt's propositions deemed by the sovereign inadmissible.—Frustrated in his grand object, the king commissions the duke of Cumberland to form a ministry.—The marquis of Rockingham and the whig party come into office.—New ministry court the popular favour—but want the support and cooperation of Mr. Pitt.—Sudden death of their patron, the duke of Cumberland.—Change in administration encourages in America opposition to the stamp act.—Colonial concerts and associations against British commodities.—Outcry in Britain against the stamp act.—Meeting of parliament.—American affairs chief subjects of ministerial consideration.—Minister's plan, a declaratory law, reserving the right of taxation and the repeal of the stamp act—plan adopted—declaratory law passed—repeal of the stamp act.—Rockingham's system shows good intentions, but temporizing policy.—Series of popular acts.—Plan for the government of Canada.—Change of ministry.—Mr. Pitt receives full powers to form a new administration.—View of affairs in British India, from the close of the war with France to the grant of the Dewanne.—Character of the system pursued by the company's servants in India at this period.

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WHEN the Grenville administration was drawing to a close, offers had been again made to Mr. Pitt, but that illustrious statesman, considering solely the good of his country, and proposing ministers to be appointed merely for their fitness, made no allowance for particular predilections, would not accede to any terms short of a complete change of men, measures, and counsels, and would not even gratify the court by leaving to its appointment the subordinate offices. His majesty did not deem

it expedient to purchase at such a price even the services of Mr. Pitt. The agent in this last negotiation had been the duke of Cumberland, who was now employed by the king to form a new ministry. The duke had himself been much connected with the whig party; of which, the duke of Newcastle being far advanced in years, the marquis of Rockingham; an upright, amiable, and well disposed nobleman, of very great fortune, was now reckoned the head. His highness, not having succeeded in his application to Mr. Pitt, made proposals to the marquis of Rockingham, which he, without any communication with that great man, accepted. The marquis of Rockingham was made first lord of the treasury, the duke of Newcastle lord privy seal, Mr. Dowdeswell chancellor of the exchequer, the duke of Grafton and general Conway principal secretaries of state, and the earl of Northington chancellor.

Rockingham administration.

THIS administration, considering itself as the whig confederacy, which had in two preceding reigns possessed the direction of affairs, appeared determined to proceed upon the whig principles, and to court popular favour; for ability or political experience none of the principal ministers were distinguished. The severest accuser of lord Bute would not pretend that the marquis of Rockingham was raised for his wisdom, any more than his lordship; so far, however, as pleasing manners and whig principles, with moderate talents, fit a man for conducting the affairs of a great nation, the marquis was qualified for being prime minister. This cabinet did not at first attain the popularity which its members expected from the appointment of a whig connexion. Why, said the city of London and other numerous bodies, is not Mr. Pitt at the head of affairs? The marquis of Rockingham may be a very well disposed man, but what are the proofs of his political capacity and of his being able to remedy the many evils that have befallen this country since the resignation of Mr. Pitt? The public had, in fact, without perceiving it, undergone a change of opinion as to the constituents of a beneficial administration. Men no longer considered the question, Is or is not the minister connected with the great whig families? but, Is he or is he not fit for con-

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Death of
the duke of
Cumber-
land.

His charac-
ter.

ducting the business of the nation? It was apprehended that the whig party had made its peace with the secret junto by which, according to the prevailing popular hypothesis, the country was governed. The chief prop of this ministry, was the duke of Cumberland, who was himself a most zealous whig, with all the principles, sentiments, and prejudices which had distinguished that party during the reign of his father and grandfather; but this advantage they did not long enjoy: on the 31st of October his royal highness died suddenly of an apoplexy, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS duke of Cumberland was a man of very respectable and amiable moral qualities. In the private relations of life, his conduct was highly meritorious. He was an affectionate brother and uncle, a mild and generous master, a sincere and ardent friend, and a zealous well wisher to the interests of his country. He was charitable to the poor, liberally bestowed alms on those who could not work to earn their bread, and devised a variety of employments for those who could labour. He was a brave, intrepid soldier; and if, as a general, he was not very successful, his disappointments could not be imputed to want of resolution, activity, or enterprise. His campaigns in Flanders were, no doubt, less successful than the expectation of the country anticipated; but those were too sanguine. It was not considered that his highness, when commander in chief of the allied army, was only four-and-twenty years of age, with few antecedent opportunities of military experience, and had to combat marshal Saxe, one of the first generals of the time, at the head of a more powerful army than France had ever before brought into the field. His conduct during the rebellion met with great praise. The severities that followed (and which the perverse malignity of jacobites styled cruelty, and no doubt exaggerated, in order to render the heroic prince unpopular) were perhaps salutary and beneficial. Fortune does not always attend the

v The report generally prevalent in Scotland, concerning the sufferings of rebels not brought to trial, are so totally inconsistent with the mild and benevolent character of the royal general, and are founded on suppositions so repugnant to law, justice, and common humanity, that they carry with them intrinsic evidence of their falsehood.

brave. The campaign, which ended at Cloister-Seven, certainly was not successful: his highness's retreat, however, saved a number of brave men, who might have been destroyed by the French, had he been rash enough to continue the contest. His cautious prudence preserved an army destined to victory under another general, and actually laid the foundation of prince Ferdinand's successes. His highness, after this event living in retirement, was eminent for the exercise of the private virtues; and so liberal, munificent, and kind was he to all within the sphere of his influence, that, although historical readers may perhaps not immediately discover in his life the ground for his usual title of the GREAT duke of Cumberland, they can in every part of his character find facts to justify the application of the GOOD duke.

WHEN the change of ministry became known in America, the spirit which had been long gathering burst into open violence; first and principally at Boston, and afterwards in several of the other colonies. At Boston the fury of the populace was directed against the officers of the crown; both those who were supposed friendly to taxation in general, and those who were appointed for executing the stamp act. Their houses were pillaged, their furniture was destroyed, their official papers were committed to the flames, and only by concealment did they save their persons. The governor assembled the council of the province, and found no inclination in them to suppress the riots.^w He attempted to muster some companies of militia in order to keep the peace; but they refused to obey his orders. The stamp officer, seeing the danger of the employment which he was required to exercise, resigned his office. In the other colonies the disorders were not so outrageous as at Boston, but were sufficiently violent to frighten revenue officers from collecting the duty on stamps. No duty was levied, and the act was completely inefficient. Deputies from nine of the thirteen colonies met at New York, on the first of October 1765, to hold a general congress.^x After having

Proceed-
ings in
America.

^w See Stedman's History, p. 39.

^x "The four colonies not represented in this congress were, New Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. From the last three of these, deputies were not sent, because the letters from Massachusetts had arrived

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spent several days in debate and deliberation, the delegates drew up a declaration of the rights and grievances of the colonies. Respecting the first head, their *rights*, they proceeded more on the moderate principles of Virginia and the middle colonies, than on the violent republican ideas of New England; the rights which they asserted they claimed as British subjects, and according to the British constitution. The declaration set forth, that they owed the same allegiance to the sovereign as the people of Great Britain, and all due subordination to parliament; that they were entitled to the same rights, privileges, and immunities, as their fellow subjects; that no taxes could be imposed upon free born Britons, but by their own consent, or that of their representatives; that the colonies were not, and could not be, represented in parliament; that the only representatives of the inhabitants of the colonies were those that were chosen by themselves; and that no taxes had been or could be imposed upon them but by their representatives; that all supplies to the crown were free gifts from the people; that, therefore, it was unreasonable in the British parliament to grant the property of the inhabitants of the colonies; and finally, that trial by jury was the right of a British subject. They next proceeded to their *grievances*: the stamp act tended to subvert the right and liberties of the colonies; the duties imposed, unconstitutional in their principle, were oppressive in their operation, and the payment impracticable; the British manufactures, which they were in the habit of purchasing, contributed greatly to the revenue; the restrictions imposed by the late acts would disable them from purchasing these articles, and consequently would materially injure the revenue; the increase and prosperity of the colonies depended on the free enjoyment of their rights and liberties: and these considerations of right and expediency they had firmly, but respectfully, urged in memorials and petitions to the king and both houses of parliament.

during the recess of their assemblies, which were not afterwards permitted to meet till the 1st of October had passed: and in New Hampshire, the assembly did not think fit to appoint deputies, although they approved of the holding of a general congress, and signified an inclination to join in any petition that should be agreed upon by the deputies of the other colonies." See Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 39.

BESIDES the actual resolutions formed, an important point was gained by the meeting of this congress, in the establishment of a correspondence and concert between the leading men of the several colonies; which paved the way for a combination, should future circumstances render their joint efforts necessary or expedient. The moderation of their proceedings, the alleged grounds of their claims, the fairness of their professions, and the apparent respectfulness of their statements to the king and parliament, manifested a sound policy, much more formidable than tumultuous violence. Associations were formed for prohibiting the importation of British manufactures until the stamp act should be repealed. On the 1st of November, when the act was to commence, neither stamps nor distributors were to be found. Commerce was at a stand, because the instruments were wanting that were now to legalize its transactions. The civil courts could not proceed for the same reason. The customs could not be levied: in short there was a general stagnation of business; and Mr. Grenville's scheme of taxation, so far from improving the revenue, obstructed one of its principal sources.

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Resolutions
against im-
ports from
Britain:

IN Britain, great clamours arose against the stamp act, and the manufacturing and mercantile interests promoted petitions for its repeal. The colonies were represented as grossly injured, and the violence which had been committed was imputed to despair. Britain itself was in a distressed situation; manufactures were at a stand, commerce was stagnant, provisions were at an enormous price, and a numerous populace without the means of procuring a livelihood. A great part of our evils was imputed to the situation of America; and from that cause, commercial difficulties were likely to increase; as vast sums were owing to British merchants from the colonies, which the debtors declared an inability to pay in their present situation.

effects of
these on
Britain.

AMERICAN affairs were the chief objects that engaged the attention of the Rockingham administration, whose situation was extremely delicate and embarrassing. On the one hand, the Grenville party, the devisers of American taxation, and the framers of the stamp act, insisted on coercive measures: on the other, Mr. Pitt and his adherents disavowed the right of taxing America, and acqui-

Plans of
adminis-
tration.

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anced in the revenue circuitously derived from her by commerce. Ministry proposed to steer a middle course, which they thought would neither precipitate disturbances in America by the rashness of their counsels, nor degrade the dignity of the crown and nation by irresolution and weakness. Mr. Secretary Conway wrote letters to this purport to the governors of the chief colonies, expressing at the same time a disposition to grant relief to grievances, and to vindicate the rights of the British crown and parliament. He recommended to them to try lenient measures; but, if they should fail, to use the force with which they were intrusted.

Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

1766.

PARLIAMENT met on the 16th of December 1765; when his majesty in his speech took notice of important occurrences in America. He stated, as a reason for assembling the parliament before the holidays, that numerous vacancies had taken place in the house of commons, which he wished them to have an opportunity of supplying, that they might proceed after the recess to a great variety of important affairs. On the 14th of January 1766, they met after the holidays; his majesty again, in his speech from the throne, treated chiefly of American affairs, and recommended such a temperature of policy as might restore harmony to the colonies, without detracting from the rights of Britain. This was the middle course which ministry adopted, and by which they hoped to satisfy both the promoters and opposers of American taxation. The beginning of the session was employed in examining a great variety of petitions, both from Americans and from British merchants and manufacturers; the object of which was, to establish the evils that resulted from the stamp act. The original proposers of the tax contended, that these petitions were procured by ministerial artifice; but that, even if trade had suffered to the degree alleged in those petitions, it would be better to submit to a temporary inconvenience, than by a repeal of the act to hazard the total loss of British supremacy.

To ascertain the grounds of the petitions and complaints, and also other important facts respecting the colo-

y By the new appointments, and the change of ministry.

nies, witnesses were examined by parliament; and of these, the most distinguished was Benjamin Franklin. Bred a printer, this extraordinary man, through genius and industry regulated and directed by judgment, rose to a high pinnacle of physical discovery: he soon showed, that the mind which could elicit fire from the heavens, could converge and reverberate the rays of moral and political light. He had visited and inspected the greater part of the colonies, was well acquainted with the best informed and ablest men in all, and none was conceived more accurately to know the circumstances of the colonies and the dispositions of the people, or more ably to comprehend the policy which in such circumstances and dispositions would be most suitable and beneficial. Highly estimated among his countrymen, he had been appointed the provincial agent for representing to the British government the evils that must accrue from the new system of taxation. The Grenville ministry little regarded statements tending to demonstrate the impolicy of their own measures. By the Rockingham administration his accounts were very differently received, and he was called to give evidence before the house of commons. His testimony tended to prove, that the colonists were well affected to the parent country, and considered the interests of Britain and America so closely connected, that they could not be separated without the greatest loss to both parties. Impressed as they were with this truth, and attached to the parent country, theirs was the affection of British subjects, enjoying constitutional rights: the new system of taxation and the stamp act they deemed flagrant violations of those rights, and would not submit to the present act, or any other proceeding from the same principle, unless they were compelled; a conciliatory system, therefore, beginning with the repeal of the stamp act, would reestablish tranquillity and harmony. Such was the substance of Franklin's evidence; and from its intrinsic probability and consistency, as well as the character of the witness, it made a very strong impression both on parliament and the public.

THOSE who were friendly to a repeal consisted of two parties: the friends of ministry, who maintained the right

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of American taxation, although they supported the expediency of rescinding that particular act; and the votaries of Mr. Pitt, who entirely denied to parliament the right of taxation. The question resolved itself, therefore, into two divisions: 1st, whether Britain possessed the right of taxing the colonies or not? 2dly, whether the stamp act was or was not expedient? The first question, depending chiefly upon great and constitutional principles, afforded an ample field for political reasoning. The deniers of the right of taxation, after prefatory remarks on the nature and end of government, and the component principles of just and beneficial polity, took a view of the constitution of England in the means that it has established for levying taxes. Tracing our history up to the earliest times, and pursuing it downwards, they contended, that no British subject had been taxed but by himself or his representatives; and that this right the planters of colonies carried with them when they emigrated, not as a specific charter granted to those colonies, but as a general right of British subjects. The operation of this right they illustrated in a great variety of instances; they endeavoured at the same time to make a distinction between what they called external duties, that is, restrictions on commerce; and internal, to be levied on the body of the people. They adduced various arguments from the practice of ancient states; and quoted modern instances of the impolicy of coercive measures and taxation on colonies.

THE arguments in favour of taxation were less forcible, though more extensive and detailed, and supported by a great variety of alleged precedents as well as instances. The British constitution was in a fluctuating state; and many things which were once constitutional were no longer so now. Various taxes had been raised, contrary to law, by forced benevolences, ship money, and other means; and the connexion between the representation and taxation could not stand the test of historical inquiry: representation was very arbitrary and accidental; whereas taxation was general. There was in the different colonies a diversity of forms and regulations, which all showed the jurisdiction of the mother country, exerting itself as might best answer the circumstances of the case; and heretofore

duties had been levied without the least opposition. The navigation act shut up their commerce with foreign countries; but did they ever question the legality of that act? Their ports were made subject to duties which cramped and diminished their trade, yet it never was maintained that this impost was illegal. The distinction between internal and external taxes was totally unfounded; if a tax were laid on any article at the ports of New England, Pennsylvania, Virginia, or any other colony, its operation would be as much felt as if it were raised in the inland part of the country. Respecting the representation in parliament, the Americans were as much represented as the greatest part of the people of England. America, it was alleged by the Grenville party, never could have objected to taxation, unless they had been encouraged by the seditious doctrines recently so prevalent in England. The question was not now, what *was* law, and what *was* the constitution? but, what *is* law, and what *is* the constitution? If a practice had generally prevailed, had been held to be law, and never had been questioned, as a number of precedents proved this to be, it became law and the constitution by that very admission. Various statutes respecting Chester, Durham, and other places, were quoted, particularly by Mr. Grenville, to support the practice of taxing without representation. Protection and obedience were reciprocal: we protected America, therefore she was bound to obey this country, and she must either obey in all points, or in none. When was America emancipated? Was she not still dependent on the mother country?

MR. PITT, who had spoken with his usual ability on the opposite side, replied to Mr. Grenville, and demonstrated the absurdity of arguing on judicial precedents in great questions of legislative policy. "I come not here" (he said) "armed at all points with law cases and acts of parliament, with the statute book doubled down in dogs ears, to defend the cause of liberty; but for the defence of liberty, upon a general constitutional principle: it is a ground on which I stand firm; on which I dare meet any man." He contended, that if America had yielded to taxation by the British parliament, in which she was

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not represented, she would yield to slavery; and that a myriad of judicial decisions could not make slavery liberty, nor agreeable to the constitution of England. He insisted that there was a difference between internal and external taxation; the first being imposed for the express purpose of raising a revenue, and the second for that of regulating commerce. Mr. Grenville had asked, when were the colonies *emancipated*? "When (said Mr. Pitt) were they made slaves? America has produced to this country, through a trade in all its branches, a revenue of two millions a year: this is the price that America pays you for protection. Are the proceeds of the stamp act to indemnify us for the loss of that revenue? and, as she has shown a determination to resist, how are you to render your stamp act efficient? Is it by force? force will destroy the value of the object for which you are contending: the event will be extremely precarious, and even success destructive: if America falls, she will fall like the strong man, and with her pull down the pillars of the constitution." On these grounds, he proposed that the stamp act should be absolutely, totally, and immediately repealed.

MINISTRY introduced a prefatory bill, declaring that Britain had a right to tax America. The declaratory act passed in the beginning of March; and on the 18th, the stamp act was repealed, by a majority of 275 to 167.² Some time after, another bill was passed to indemnify those who had incurred penalties on account of the stamp act.

Popular
acts.

THE great object of the Rockingham ministry appears to have been popularity. The cyder tax had been most undeservedly unpopular. To court the favour of the people, they proposed and procured the repeal of this tax, though equitable and productive. Resolutions of the house were passed, declaring the illegality of general warrants and the seizure of papers. They proposed and procured an act for restraining the importation of foreign silks, and thereby excited the joyful gratitude of the English manufacturers. The price of corn still continuing high, provisions were made for preventing monopoly and exports, and procuring by importation a more liberal supply.

² See Parliamentary Journals.

They promoted the extension of trade, especially by a commercial treaty with Russia. Notwithstanding these popular and beneficial acts, the ministry could not acquire credit, strength, and stability. The votaries of the hypothesis concerning secret influence, represented them as the tools of lord Bute, who employed them until a more efficient cabinet could be formed, and would soon abandon them when no longer necessary for his purpose. The partisans of Mr. Pitt, and those who from patriotism wished the reigns of government to be placed in the ablest hands, desired that he should be prime minister; and before the termination of the session, a great majority of the nation wished and expected a speedy change of ministry. Their immediate dissolution is generally believed to have been accelerated by the chancellor Northington. After the prorogation of parliament, ministers projected a plan for the civil government of Canada. The new system proposed to leave to the natives their ancient rights of property or civil laws, and to temper the rigour of their criminal code by the more equitable and liberal system of English jurisprudence. The chancellor represented the scheme as theoretical, visionary, and totally unworthy of practical statesmen; and declared he could no longer be a member of so incapable an administration. His majesty was convinced of their incompetency to carry on with beneficial effect the functions of administration. He made overtures to Mr. Pitt, containing ample powers to form a ministry, and on the 12th of July the administration of the marquis of Rockingham terminated.

ROCKINGHAM's ministry had been formed on a principle which prevailed during the greater part of the two preceding reigns. It was composed of what was called *the whig connexion*, but certainly showed neither ability nor efficiency that could make it permanent. The extraordinary powers of Burke, which were employed in its defence, endeavoured to impute its dissolution to the interior cabinet, the existence of which he assumed, and the fancied operation of which he described with such strength and brilliancy.^a But it really fell, from its own weakness:

^a In his *Thoughts on the Discontented*.

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in the most important offices there was neither great talents, political knowledge, nor official experience. The marquis himself was a very upright and disinterested man, and his colleagues possessed fair and respectable characters; but they do not appear to have acted from their own judgment: they wished to please all parties, a sentiment indicating more of an amiable disposition than of profound wisdom, and leading to indecisive and consequently ineffectual measures. Of this kind was their principal policy, that ascertained the character of their administration—the law which declared the British right of taxing America, and the repeal of the stamp act.^b Their less important measures were popular rather than able. They certainly were very moderate in the bestowal of lucrative appointments on themselves or their friends; but, on the other hand, their claims on public gratitude were not great. Perhaps, indeed, it will be difficult to find, in the history of ministers, a set of men more respectable for private characters, or more inefficient as public servants, than the marquis of Rockingham's administration.

Affairs of
India.

BEFORE we proceed with British affairs, it is necessary to take a view of India. On the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, we have brought the narrative of those India transactions in which France was concerned, to the close of the war. Those of Bengal, to which her power and influence in the last years of hostilities very

^b The reader will, I hope, pardon me for repeating what I had formerly written on this subject, as it illustrates the grounds on which I formed a judgment of the marquis of Rockingham's ministry.—“An attempt to satisfy two parties of totally contrary views, by not deciding the point at issue, is rarely either the offspring of wisdom, or the parent of success. Such temporizing indecision generally dissatisfies both parties, and keeps the differences alive. The stamp act had been opposed in America, not as inexpedient, but as unjust. They had not pretended that they could not pay the impost, but that the imposters had no right to tax. Either the stamp act was a grievance, or was not: if a grievance, the redress did not apply to the subject of complaint; if not a grievance, why offer redress? If the objections of the colonies were groundless, it would have been just in parliament to disregard them; and wise or unwise, according to the value of the object, means of coercion, and probable result. If the right was ascertained, and we thought coercion prudent, the repeal would be absurd; if not the declaration of right would be a mere impotent bravado. If the complaints of America were well grounded, then it would have been just and wise to renounce the exercise of an unjust power. Here was the maintenance of an obnoxious speculative principle, with the abandonment of practical benefit, for which only it could deserve support. The declaratory law tended to counteract, in America, the effect of the repeal. The measures of the Rockingham administration were esteemed the result of good intentions, but of feeble and short-sighted policy.” *Life of Burke*, 1st edition, p. 76.

little extended, we have not pursued to so late a period, but left them at the perfect establishment of the company's power. Meer Jaffier Ally Cawn, the viceroy of these provinces, elevated by the English, and dependent on them, found himself by his elevation surrounded with difficulties and dangers. The relations of his deposed predecessor regarded with resentment the man whom they deemed the murderer of their kinsman, and the usurper of his power. The sums stipulated to indemnify the English had exhausted his treasury; and the commercial privileges granted to them, diminished the revenue by which he might have repaired his finances. To relieve his necessities, he betook himself to unwarrantable and tyrannical methods of levying money, and thus lost the affections of his subjects. From the indigence and dissatisfaction of his people, he was unable to procure or extort the supplies that he required; his troops were ill paid and useless; and his principal lords not only resisted his arbitrary exactions, but refused the just and accustomed tribute. Thus distressed, he tried to relieve himself by infringing on the privileges and exemptions granted to the servants of the India company, and thereby alienated the affections of those who alone were able to defend him against his enemies. In the year 1758, the mogul or emperor of Hindostan had been deposed by a conspiracy, headed by his vizier, and assisted by the Mahrattas; and not long after his deposition, he died in prison. His eldest son, Shah Zadda, endeavoured to assert his right to the throne of Hindostan, and was seconded by Mr. Law, a French gentleman, who, with about two hundred of his countrymen, after the conquest of the French settlements in Bengal by the English, had retired among the natives. Shah Zadda marched toward the frontiers of Bengal. Ramnorrain, the nabob, or governor of Patna, within Jaffier's viceroyalty, had refused to acknowledge his authority, until the approach of colonel Clive and the English army intimidated him to submission. When Shah Zadda reached the vicinity of Patna, Ramnorrain, thought the present a good opportunity to render himself independent of the viceroy of Bengal, and declared for the prince of Hindostan. Jaffier was again obli

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ged to apply to the English council. Colonel Clive marched towards Patna; Ramnorain proposed to return to his allegiance; and Shah Zadda retired, sending at the same time a letter to colonel Clive, representing his distressed situation, and declaring that he did not mean to disturb Jaffier's government, but wished to collect a force against the usurper of his father's throne. Colonel Clive, finding on inquiry that it would be impolitic to interfere in his behalf, sent him a very polite answer, declining, in the company's name, to take any share in the dispute concerning the succession. Soon after, on the 14th of January 1760, colonel Clive resigned the command to colonel Caillaud, and returned to Europe.

SHAH ZADDA, despairing of assistance from the English, took the advantage of the interval between the departure of colonel Clive, and the arrival of his successor. Attacking and defeating Ramnorain, he besieged Patna; but colonel Caillaud, with the European troops, having come to its relief, he raised the siege. The prince, now by the death of his father declared emperor of Hindostan, by the name of Shah Allum, was assailed by the British and Bengal troops, and entirely defeated.

New revolution in Bengal.

IN the summer of 1760, Mr. Vansittart arrived at Calcutta as governor general, and successor to colonel Clive, when a new scheme of politics was adopted. It was the opinion of the council, that the war in support of Meer Jaffier was extremely imprudent; that he was unworthy of the protection of the English; that he was altogether destitute of gratitude for the favours which he had received; that he and his son were endeavouring to dissolve the connexion; that the young mogul's affairs wore a favourable aspect in his own country; that it would be wise in the company to enter into a treaty with the hereditary prince; and that, if established on the throne of Delhi, he might be a most beneficial ally. To this alliance, the enmity between Shah Allum and Jaffier was a great, but, to the ingenuity of the council, not an insuperable obstacle. It appeared to the governor general and council of Calcutta, that Jaffier was totally unfit for the viceroyalty; and therefore it was expedient that he should have a protector, invested with full powers to guide him

to the best and most salutary counsels. The fittest person for this office was conceived to be Cossim Ally Khan, son-in-law to the viceroy; to arrange and execute the proposed change, therefore, governor Vansittart and colonel Caillaud marched to Moorshedabad, surrounded his palace, and demanded that he should dismiss evil counselors, and instantly place his government in the hands of his son-in-law; threatening, in case of refusal, to storm the palace. Jaffier, knowing that he was incapable of resistance against such a force, yielded to their request, and beseeched them to grant him an asylum in Calcutta; to which they assented, on condition that he would entirely abdicate the viceroyalty. Cossim was proclaimed subah of the three provinces, having previously stipulated, as a recompense for this great service done to the provinces, the entire resignation to the India company of a considerable part of the revenue. The new viceroy generously bestowed a present for the use of the army, amounting to five lacks of rupees, about 62,500*l.* and further added a gift of twenty lacks of rupees, about 225,000*l.* to general Vansittart, and three other members of a select committee which had concerted the plan. There were however, members of the council, and others, who did not approve of these transactions. Jaffier's viceroyalty had been guaranteed by a treaty, of which there was no evidence to show any violation on his part, no proof that he had conspired against the English interest. Nothing conducive to the general advantage of the company could be rationally expected from such a revolution, as no successor could be more completely subject to them, from his want of personal capacity or importance: and this last reasoning was found by experience to be just.

COSSIM ALLY KHAN was of a character very different from that of his father-in-law. Bold, subtle, enterprising, and ingenious, he conceived the design of freeing himself from dependence on the English. Not ascribing to generosity, services for which he had paid so high a price, he did not think that he owed a return of gratitude. Though determined, however, to attempt his own emancipation, he

Cossim
Ally Khan

a His own son had been killed by a flash of lightning.

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did not precipitately discover his intentions. He availed himself of their assistance, defeated Shah Allum, and drove him from the frontiers of his province. He also reduced the refractory rajahs, who had rebelled against the feeble administration of Jaffier, and compelled them to make good the payment of their tribute; repaired the exhausted finances, confirmed the discipline and fidelity of his troops, and brought his territories to peace and obedience. Having thus secured himself at home, he began to prepare for shaking off his dependence on the English. He first removed from Moorshedabad, where his conduct, from his vicinity to Calcutta, was exposed to the vigilant and jealous inspection of the company; and in 1761, pitched his residence at Mongheer, two hundred miles farther up the Ganges, which he strongly fortified. He also began to new model his army, and tried to overcome the timidity that made them stand so much in awe of British soldiers. Sensible of the superiority of European discipline, he studied it with great attention, taught it to his soldiers, and introduced the European modes and construction of fire arms. He changed the muskets from match-locks to fire-locks; and, altering the cannon, formed, according to the English pattern, a powerful train of artillery. Aware of the mischiefs from treachery, so frequent in India, he endeavoured to conciliate the chief men of his court, and confined or cut off those whom he apprehended to be insincere. Having thus strengthened himself, he began gradually to throw off the mask. In the latter end of the year 1762, he insisted that the English private traders should be subjected to the regular payment of duties throughout his dominions. This step alarmed the factory, and Mr. Vansittart himself went up to Mongheer, to expostulate with him on the subject. The viceroy answered with great firmness, that if the English were permitted to trade without paying of customs, they would in time monopolise the commerce of his country, and consequently annihilate that part of his revenue. Should this be the case, it would be much more for his interest to lay his trade entirely open, which would draw a greater number of merchants into his dominions, promote the sale of their produce and manufactures, enrich his territories, and

improve his revenue. He added, that it would also effectually cut off the principal subjects of dispute between him and the English, an object which he professed to have very much at heart. The governor, sensible that an open trade was in the viceroy's power, and that it would be a great loss to the private traffic of the company's servants, thought it expedient to agree to certain restrictions. The factory at Calcutta, informed of this agreement, was enraged; and it was now generally regretted that Jaffier had not been suffered to continue upon his throne. On the 17th of January 1763, the council of Calcutta publicly disavowed the treaty concluded by the governor, not only as having been made without authority, but as being dishonourable to the English name, and pernicious to the English interest. Great disputes arose, commerce was interrupted, and applications were made to Cossim to enter into a new agreement; but, confident of his strength, he peremptorily refused, and even returned a very haughty answer: both sides now prepared for war.

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revolts
from the
English.

THE English struck the first blow, by surprising Patna War. on the 25th of June 1763; but the conquerors, despising the enemy too much, neglected prudent precautions. In their eagerness to pillage that opulent city, they dispersed themselves on every side. The Indian governor informed of the disorder of the enemy, and reinforced by the country, returned to Patna, attacked the scattered English, destroyed many of them, and compelled the rest to seek refuge in the fort. Finding themselves unable to defend the place, they abandoned it, crossed the Ganges, and marched downwards toward Calcutta. On the 1st of July they were overtaken by the enemy in great force, and, after an obstinate resistance, entirely defeated. About this time the deputies that had been sent to Mongheer, returned to the presidency, and were, with their attendants, treacherously murdered. Major Adams now took the field, with one regiment of the king's forces, a few of the company's two troops of European cavalry, ten companies of Sepoys, and twelve pieces of cannon. The English commander was anxiously desirous to bring the enemy to battle; and, by his judicious manœuvres, succeeded (July 19) in compelling them to an action at Ballasora on the

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Ganges, about forty miles below Moorshedabad.^d Cossim's troops, elated with recent victory and improved in discipline, received the Europeans with great firmness, but were at last completely defeated. Major Adams losing no time, proceeded immediately to Moorshedabad, but found a considerable body of the enemy intrenched before the place. Their intrenchments were fifteen feet high, and defended by numerous artillery: the English commander, therefore, had recourse to stratagem. On the 23d of July, in the evening, with a small body, he made a feint of an attack upon the part where the enemy was strongest; and the same night, while the Indians were amused on that side, he led the main body of his troops round to the weakest and least defensive part of the intrenchments. The Indians in the morning, astonished and frightened by this movement, abandoned their position, and left Moorshedabad to the English. Major Adams, without slackening his diligence, pursued the viceroy through marshes and forests, across many wide branches of the Ganges. Cossim, with great judgment, abstaining from a decisive engagement, defended his dominions post by post, and in various detachments. On the 2d of August, however, they were so strongly stationed on the banks of Nullas, one of the tributary rivers of the Ganges, that they resolved to await the attack of the enemy. A very obstinate battle took place, in which at last, the English obtained the victory. The Indians again made a stand at a strong fort called Audanulla, covered in front by a considerable swamp, on one side by mountains, and on the other by the river. To this natural security, they added very strong fortifications, amounting to 100 pieces of cannon, and surrounded by a deep ditch, fifty-four feet wide, and full of water, except on the side of the mountains. The only dry ground by which the English could carry on their approaches, was a small part between the swamp and the river. Having invested the place on this side for a fortnight, without much progress, major Adams tried another.

^d The reader, who has not attended minutely to the geography of Bengal, will be pleased to observe, that this is not Ballasore, which is at the mouth of the Ganges.

Observing that the Indians, who trusted to its remoteness and natural strength, were negligent on the side of the mountain, he detached, during the night of the 4th September, major Irvine, to attack that post; and before day-break, followed with the rest of his troops. By this unexpected movement, the Indians were thrown into the utmost confusion: the intrenchments were carried sword in hand, and great slaughter ensued. They abandoned the place, and made no farther stand until they came to Mongheer, the viceroy's residence. Major Adams followed them, and on the 2d of October invested the town, which, after nine days siege, surrendered at discretion. The last strong post of Cossim now was Patna, which was well fortified, and defended by ten thousand troops within the city, with large bodies of horse in the neighbourhood, to annoy the besiegers. Cossim had about two hundred English prisoners, taken in the defeat at Patna, whom he cruelly murdered: but they were not long unrevenged. He had, indeed, made skilful dispositions for the defence of his city, but not sufficient to withstand English force and art, so well conducted. On the 6th of November, after a siege of eight days, major Adams took the city by storm; and thus, first of Europeans, effected the entire conquest of the kingdom of Bengal. He fought, in four months, four decisive battles, forced the strongest intrenchments, took too regularly fortified places, with great quantities of arms and stores, and subdued the ablest, most skilful, cautious, and resolute enemy which Britain had yet encountered in India.

DRIVEN from his own territories, Cossim sought refuge with Sujah Dowla,^e nabob of Oude in the northwest vicinity of Bengal, and hereditary vizier to the great mogul. The subah of Oude afforded an asylum to Cossim's person, but would not admit the remains of his army. Being unwilling rashly to embroil himself with so formidable a power, he declared that he wished peace to continue between Oude and the English. Notwithstanding these professions, however, Sujah Dowla saw the advances of such neighbours with a jealous eye. A negotiation was set on

Cossim expelled from Bengal, takes refuge in the vicinity of Oude.

Sujah Dowla

^e This prince, from the similarity of names, is often confounded with Surajah Dowla, the viceroy of Bengal, who was displaced by colonel Clive.

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War between the
English and Sujah
Dowla.
Restoration of Jaffier.

foot between him and Shah Allum, for uniting to restore Cossim. Encouraged by the assistance of these powers, Cossim drew together a considerable force; and meanwhile the council of Calcutta issued a proclamation for restoring Jaffier. Major Adams being now dead, was succeeded by major Hector Monro; and the new commander, with great spirit, activity, and military skill, marched against the Indian confederates in 1764. His whole army consisted of fifteen hundred Europeans, and seven thousand five hundred native troops. It was the 22d of October before he could come up with the enemy, who were posted at a place called Buxard, on the confines of Bahar and Oude. The major perceiving their situation to be very strong, deferred an attack until he had explored their force on every side, keeping himself prepared, however, lest they should anticipate his intentions. His precaution was not unnecessary: the following day the Indians advanced to his camp, and, after a contest of three hours, were completely defeated. The major attacked Chandageer, a fort about fifty miles farther up the country, and being repulsed, found it expedient to raise the siege. Dowla soon afterwards collected his scattered and defeated troops. Major Monro was at this time recalled home, and major Carnac appointed his successor; but before he arrived, sir Robert Fletcher, second in command, wishing to signalize himself, attacked and routed Dowla's army, and stormed the fort of Chanda-geer on the 14th of January, 1765. Sir Robert proceeded to Eliabad, a large city on the Ganges, and the enemy's capital, which he soon reduced. In this state major Carnac found affairs on his arrival in April, when he took the supreme command. Sujah Dowla was now abandoned by the mogul; who observing the signal successes of the English, made overtures for a treaty. Dowla, a man of courage, resolution, and policy, did not yield to despair; he collected his scattered troops, and also interested the Mahrattas in his favour. These tribes, inhabiting the mountains of India, more active and warlike than their neighbours on the plains, entered Oude. Terrible to the other Indians, the Mahrattas were of little efficacy when opposed to the valour and discipline of English soldiers. On the 20th of May, Carnac attacked the Indians at a

place called Calpi, and gained a decisive victory. Sujah Dowla now surrendered at discretion to the English commander.

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Dowla surrenders at discretion.

Death of Jaffier.

JAFFIER ALLY KAWN, having returned to Moorshedabad as subah of Bengal, died in the beginning of February 1765. He was a weak and cruel tyrant; and in his promotion, depression, and restoration, the mere tool of the English council. A short time before his death, he nominated his second son, Nazim Ill Dowla, then about eighteen years of age, his successor, in preference to Miram, the heir of his deceased eldest son. Knowing the moderate talents and character of the youth, the council supported him in the succession, previously stipulating the terms of their protection. His father had been obliged by treaty to maintain an army of twelve thousand horse, and as many foot; but, as the military establishment had not been kept up according to the terms of the agreement, the company abandoned them entirely, and took on themselves the care of defending the prince against all his enemies; as a recompense for which spontaneous protection, he was to pay seventy lacks of rupees^f annually. Having made this provision for his security, they did not lose sight of his instruction and internal accommodation. The father's chief favourite had been Nunducumar, his prime minister, who held the same place in the esteem of his son. This officer, a man of considerable ability, was discovered to have strongly urged the subah to shake off his dependence on the company, and was suspected of carrying on a correspondence with Sujah Dowla. The company insisted that this minister should be dismissed, and that another person, to be appointed by them, should act in the double capacity of minister and tutor. The young prince objected strongly to these regulations, and contended earnestly for having the appointment of his own servants. This was a license, however, which the council thought it by no means fitting to grant, and he was obliged to sign the agreement according to their dictation. The contract so formed was said to be the most advantageous for the

^f About 875,000l.

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English, that had ever been concluded with an Indian power. Nunducomar was summoned to Calcutta, to stand his trial for treason, and underwent an examination by a select committee; to whom he advanced such convincing arguments in favour of his innocence, that he was allowed to depart untried.

Lord Clive
returns to
India.

THE company, informed of the wars that had broken out in India, sent over lord Clive, with powers to act as commander in chief, president, and governor of Bengal. His lordship arrived at Calcutta, on the 3d of May 1765. The business to be performed was intricate; the persons with whom he would be obliged to contend, were able, active, powerful, and habituated to the highest exertions of authority; it was therefore expedient to send a personage of the highest name in British India. Lord Clive discovered that the acceptance of presents was become extremely prevalent among the company's servants: this mode of opening business had obtained time out of mind in the east, and was found not disagreeable to its visitors from the west. A select committee was formed, with lord Clive at its head, for scrutinizing the gifts; but the investigation was by no means pleasing, either to the council, or to many of the principal officers. It was alleged on one side, that luxury, corruption, and extreme avidity for making immense fortunes in a little time, had so totally infected the company's servants, that nothing less than a general reform, and an effectual eradication of those vices, could preserve the settlements from certain and immediate destruction. Fortunes, lord Clive said, of 100,000*l.* had been obtained within two years; and individuals, very young in the service, were returning home with a million and a half. It was answered, that the gentlemen in question had done the greatest services to the country; that its present happy situation was owing to their efforts; that the presents were conformable to the custom of India, and not being accepted till after the negotiation was concluded, had no influence on the terms; that the salaries allowed by the company were so small as to be no inducement to men of talents to run the risk of their lives in so remote a situation, without other advantages; and finally, that those who objected to the presents,

had made their own fortunes by the same means. Regardless of these remonstrances, and of all personal allusions, lord Clive framed regulations calculated to restrain the rapacity of the company's servants. *

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HAVING adopted this measure for the civil government of the province, he joined the army at Eliabad, to conclude the peace with Sujah Dowla. On his arrival, he found that the success of the English arms in that quarter promised nothing but future wars; that to ruin Oude, would break down the barriers between the Mah-rattas and Bengal; and that therefore it was prudent to leave to Dowla considerable power. Accordingly, peace was concluded with that prince; and the nabob agreed to pay fifty lacks of rupees to the company, as an imdemnification for the expenses of the war. A treaty with the mogul was also concluded on the 11th of August 1765, by which the company were appointed perpetual collectors of the revenues for Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; for which privilege they were to pay twenty-six lacks of rupees annually. The revenue accruing to the company by this treaty, after all deductions, amounting to 1,700,000l. a year; and lord Clive, having established peace on such profitable terms, made several judicious regulations for securing and improving it to the greatest advantage.

English
obtain the
collection
of the
revenue.

THUS have we seen a mercantile company, in less than ten years, acquire by war and policy, more extensive possessions, and a richer revenue, than those of several European monarchs. This was an epoch in the history of conquest. Nations of merchants had before conquered very extensive dominions, but this was a mere corporate body of private subjects. The principles on which the servants of this company of merchants proceeded, were formed in a great degree by the habits and conditions of the masters. The leading object was gain; ambition was only secondary and instrumental: power and dominion were esteemed merely as the means of profit. Where the Romans carried their arms, they sought warlike glory, victory, and the splendor of triumph, as well as the gains of plunder; they took their superstition with them; and from the conquered countries made additions to their gods, as well as to their treasury. The Spaniards, the

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creatures of gloomy bigotry, carried to Mexico their zeal for making converts, as well as for acquiring silver and gold. These and many other victors were actuated by various passions; but the British conquerors in India directed their pursuits to one object exclusively, the acquisition of money. They considered, in every transaction of war, peace, or alliance, what money could be drawn from the inhabitants. In their modes of exaction from the feeble natives, they observed the systematic regularity of commercial habits; they made bargains; and for the money received, stipulated value delivered. They pillaged, not with the ferocity of soldiers, but with the cool exactness of debtor and creditor. Instead of saying to the sovereign of Hindostan, "You have a very rich territory, and we must have a great part of the product," (which might have appeared the language of robbers,) they adopted a mercantile mode: "We shall collect your revenue for you, reserving to ourselves only eighty per cent. for factorage:" this was the spirit of their agreements. Before they planned aggression, they calculated the probable proceeds, the debts that they might extinguish, and the addition, on the balance of accounts, which they might make to the sum total. They considered war with the natives, merely as a commercial adventure: by so much risk encountered, a certain quantity of blood spilt, and a certain extent of territory desolated, great sums were to be gained. In all their intercourse, however, with the natives, in the plans which they devised, and the efforts which they employed for the accumulation of wealth, they manifested the immense superiority of the British character, with a rapidity of success, that brought an unprecedented influx of opulence to this country, and effected a considerable change in the sentiments, habits, and pursuits of Englishmen.

THE sufferings of Hindostan attached no blame to the nation; they merely demonstrated, that a copartnery of trading subjects is not fit to exercise sovereignty. Even if their schemes of policy were wise and equitable, they did not possess a sufficient control over their servants, to ensure the execution. To supply this deficiency, was afterwards the work of legislative wisdom.

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Mr. Pitt receives unlimited powers to form an administration—differs with earl Temple concerning the appointments.—Temple refuses any office.—Duke of Grafton first lord of the treasury.—Charles Townshend, chancellor of the exchequer.—Pitt, lord privy seal, and created earl of Chatham.—King of Denmark marries princess Mutilda of England.—State of Parties.—High price of provisions—order of council to prevent exportation and engrossing.—Proclamation discussed in parliament.—Lord Mansfield proposes an act of indemnity, as an acknowledgment of its illegality—resisted by ministers.—Parliament inquires into the affairs of the India company—rescinds the proposed increase of dividends—an opinion started that the territorial possessions belong to the crown, alarms the company.—Mr. Townshend opposes the prime minister on a question of land tax.—Mr. Townshend's new scheme for raising a revenue from America.—Session rises.—Affairs on the continent—France—Germany—Prussia—Russia—Poland. Suppression of the Jesuits in Spain.—Death of the duke of York—of Charles Townshend.—Earl Chatham by ill health prevented from taking an active share in public affairs.—Weakness and distraction of ministry.—Short meeting of parliament—dissolution.—Review of Irish affairs.

MR. PITT projected an administration that should include men of all parties. He proposed lord Temple to be first commissioner of the treasury; but that nobleman, being now politically connected with his brother, wished for a greater share of power to the Grenville supporters, than Mr. Pitt thought expedient; and, as they could not agree on the terms of the other appointments, his lordship would not accept of the proffered office. At length the duke of Grafton, who had been secretary of state in the

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Grafton
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Mr. Pitt
created
earl of
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marquis of Rockingham's administration, was made first lord of the treasury, and general Conway, another member of the whig party, was continued secretary of state; his colleague was the earl of Shelburne, a nobleman of considerable abilities, possessing a great extent of literary and political information, a warm admirer and zealous supporter of Mr. Pitt, and an adopter of his opinion, that neither whig confederacies nor court cabals, but talents assisted by public opinion, at once participating and directing its energies, ought to govern this country; and that appointments of trust in the various departments of the state should be conferred according to the appropriate fitness of the person to be nominated. Mr. Charles Townshend, recently a member of the Grenville party, was appointed chancellor of the exchequer; lord chief justice Pratt, created lord Camden, was made chancellor; his predecessor, the earl of Northington, became president of the council; and Mr. Pitt himself took the privy seal. He was now called to the upper house, under the title of the earl of Chatham; but his acceptance of a peerage lessened the popularity of this illustrious statesman. If the case be impartially considered, the first man of his age and country accepting high rank, affords no ground for censure. On the verge of sixty, and oppressed with bodily infirmity, he had become less fit than formerly for the vehement and contentious eloquence of the house of commons. His wisdom and patriotism might operate in the upper as well as in the lower house; and the office which he held in administration had no connexion with one house more than with the other. There is nothing inconsistent with true greatness, in desiring to found a family; and the peerage can never receive more honourable accessions, than from those who have exerted distinguished ability in performing eminent services.

DURING this year, the distresses from the high price of provisions continued to increase, and excited commotions and riots. The populace, thinking that certain dealers were engrossing and using other illegal means to enhance the price of provisions, took upon themselves to regulate the markets and punish alleged delinquents, and proceeded to flagrant violence, which proved fatal to seve-

ral lives. Special commissions were appointed to try the offenders, of whom the ringleaders were capitally condemned; but most of them were afterwards reprieved and pardoned. On the 11th of September, a proclamation was issued for enforcing the law against forestallers, regraters, and engrossers of corn. By not a few it was apprehended that this denunciation would do more harm than good, as it presumed the scarcity to be artificial, which actually arose from real want. As the price of wheat continued to increase, another proclamation was issued on the 26th, prohibiting the exportation of grain, and an embargo was laid on all outwardbound ships laden with corn.

THE opponents of the present ministry consisted of two parties, the Grenville and the Rockingham. A coalition was attempted between the former and the ministry, but without effect. Meanwhile Charles Townshend was intriguing with the Rockingham party, and trying to effect the removal of the duke of Grafton; and, though he did not succeed, the administration was evidently discordant. Lord Chatham, on account of the bad state of his health, could not control as formerly the jarring elements.

THIS summer there happened an event which was very interesting to the royal family. The princess Matilda, posthumous daughter to the prince of Wales, and sister to his majesty, in the sixteenth year of her age, was married to her cousin the king of Denmark. This treaty was expected to strengthen the connexion between the two countries, and in that view was deemed politically advantageous to both; and to Denmark it brought pecuniary emolument, as a portion of 100,000*l.* was bestowed on her highness. Frederic William, the king's youngest brother, was now dead, and the income which had been enjoyed by William duke of Cumberland, amounting to 45,000*l.* a year, was divided between his majesty's surviving brothers; the youngest of whom, Henry Frederic, was created duke of Cumberland.

Marriage of the princess Matilda to the king of Denmark.

IN the course of this year, the chevalier de St. George, pretender to the crown of Britain, died in the seventy-eighth year of his age, leaving two sons, Charles, who headed the rebellion in 1745, and the second a Romish cardinal.

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Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

On the 11th of November parliament met, and the principal subject of his majesty's speech was the high price of provisions, with the measures which he had embraced, the disturbances which had arisen, and the orders that had been issued. The proclamation laying an embargo upon corn, occasioned a discussion of the prerogatives of the crown, and was represented as an assumption by the council of a power to dispense with the laws, a practice which was effectually precluded by the revolution. The measure was allowed to be expedient, and even necessary; but, to prevent its establishment as a precedent, it was suggested that an act of indemnity should be passed to protect from punishment the framers and executors of an illegal order. A bill to that effect was accordingly proposed, which caused warm debates, especially in the house of peers. Lords Chatham and Camden contended, that a dispensing power in cases of state necessity was an inherent prerogative in the crown: a power to provide for the public safety in cases of emergency, must be lodged somewhere: by our constitution it was lodged in the king, only to be exerted under great necessity occurring during the recess of parliament, and to last only until parliament could be assembled. It was answered, that necessity was the principle by which all the evil practices of the Stuarts were justified. The exception of necessity had been proposed as a clause to the petition of rights; the lords had agreed to it; but, on a conference with the commons, it had been rejected. If a necessity, of which the executive government is to judge, be admitted as a reason for deviating from the established law, the laws and liberties of the people may depend on the discretion of the crown. The proposed mode of a bill of indemnity asserts the general constitutional law, while it excuses the deviation, after parliament has on an inquiry discovered that the alleged necessity did exist. These arguments were chiefly supported by lord Mansfield, and were evidently more agreeable to the precision with which prerogative is defined by the British constitution, than the opposite reasonings; and lords Chatham and Camden were charged with deserting their former principles. The two patriots indeed appear to have been carried by the heat of debate

into speculative error; but the general tenor of their respective conduct through the whole of their political history, affords the best proof that they intended no violation of British liberty.

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THE late immense acquisitions in India rendered that country, and the company's affairs, objects of the highest importance to lawgivers and statesmen; and this year, for the first time, oriental concerns occupied the chief time and attention of parliament but not till they had undergone a contentious discussion in the East India house.

Indian
affairs con-
sidered in
parlia-
ment.

WHEN the late acquisitions that accrued from the peace and treaties of lord Clive were known in England, it was generally expected, that, as the possessions had so much increased in value, there would be a proportionate rise in the dividends; thence India stock, in July 1766, had risen from a hundred and eighty-eight to two hundred and thirty-one. The Dutch company had, in April, declared a dividend of twenty per cent.; and their possessions and revenues, it was contended, were far surpassed by the English. Our India company, therefore, (the proprietors asserted,) could afford a much greater dividend than six per cent. On this ground they urged the directors to declare an increase, but were answered, that though many advantages had been acquired, great debts had also been incurred; and that, both in justice and prudence, the payment of debts ought to precede the division of profits. If we make a great increase in our dividends, (said they,) we may give an ideal value to stock, which, as it cannot be supported, will, like the South Sea bubble, burst upon our heads. But not convinced by this reasoning, the proprietors charged the directors with an intention of limiting dividends, to increase their own riches. On the 24th of September, at a general quarterly court of the proprietors, it was proposed, contrary to the opinion of most of the directors, that the yearly dividend should be increased from six to ten per cent. Two days after, the question was put by ballot, and carried in the affirmative, 340 against 231. Government at that time sent a message to the directors, informing them, that parliament was to examine the state of Indian affairs, and directing them to have their papers ready for inspection.

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ON the 25th of November, a committee was appointed to inspect the state of the company's affairs, commercial and territorial. Orders were given, that every account, letter, treaty, or document of any kind, should be laid before the committee. The court of directors presented a petition, setting forth the great injury that it would be to the company, and the many ill consequences which would probably attend the publication of the private correspondence between them and their servants: and after a considerable debate, it was agreed that the private correspondence should not be printed. The statements before parliament, however, were so important, as to introduce questions much more comprehensive than any hitherto discussed by the legislature concerning British India. Having viewed and examined the management of the commercial and territorial possessions, several members, and among them lord Chatham, denied the right of the company to have territorial possessions, as such were not conveyed by their charters, and were totally foreign to the nature and object of a trading corporation. Even if it were legally just, and politically expedient, that an associated body of merchants should be sovereigns of those extensive dominions, the great expense of government in the protection of that company entitled it to the revenues, for the purpose of indemnification.

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THE supporters of the opposite opinion denied that the charter restricted its holders from acquiring territory; and contended, that if government had a right to the late acquisitions in India, it ought to submit its claims to a court of law. Towards the end of the session, the company proposed a convention with government concerning the disputed dominions; that an agreement should be made between government and that body, concerning the territorial acquisitions; and, after various overtures, the following terms were accepted, presented to parliament, and passed into a law on the 24th of June; being entitled, "A bill for establishing an agreement between government and the East India company." By this stipulation, the chartered corporation engaged to pay to government 400,000*l.* yearly for two years, by half yearly payments; during which time the territory and revenues lately

Agreement
between
government
and the com-
pany.

obtained were to continue in the hands of the present possessors; but if they were deprived of any of them by a foreign power, a proportional abatement was to be made in the annual payments; and money wrongfully paid, was to be refunded. Meanwhile the company held a general court on the 6th of May, in which the half yearly dividend from midsummer to christmas was declared to be $6\frac{1}{4}$, being one-fourth beyond that of the preceding half year. Ministry had sent a message, advising the company not to increase their dividend until their affairs were farther examined; but, finding that the recommendation had not produced the desired effect, the duke of Grafton proposed a bill to prevent them from raising their dividends before the meeting of the next session of parliament. The object avowed by his grace and the supporters of the bill, was to prevent such augmentations as might raise the imaginary value of the stock far beyond its real, so as to introduce stockjobbing speculations, which had been so fatal in a former reign; that, besides, government was interested in preventing such increase of dividend as might diminish the value of the territorial revenue; to which the claims of the state, though postponed, had not been relinquished: moreover, the rapid rise in India stock would diminish the price of the other funds. The opposers of the bill contended, that the circumstances of the company fully justified the proposed addition, and that means could easily have been employed to prevent any farther rise; that a legislative interposition for controlling the dividend of a trading company, legally made by those in whom the power was by law vested, and when no abuse was alleged was an *ex post facto* law, that infringed the rights of property; and by tending to lessen the security and freedom from the control of government, which made the British funds so much the repositories of continental money, it might affect the national credit. The rescinding bill passed into a law after a very powerful opposition, in which two of the ministers, general Conway and Mr. Townshend, joined: in the house of lords a strong protest was made by the united force of the Grenville and Rockingham parties.

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IN another motion the prime minister was entirely defeated. It had been uniformly the practice, at former periods of peace, to reduce the land tax from four to three shillings in the pound: but since the peace of 1763, the state of the public finances was not thought to admit of this reduction, and accordingly it had not been proposed by either of the successive administrations. This year, when the chancellor of the exchequer moved the annual bill, there was a strong opposition; and it was carried against ministry, that the tax should be no more than three shillings. Mr. Townshend was on this occasion accused of not being sincere and earnest in his professed exertions: there was evidently in his character a great degree of instability; but whether his fluctuations arose chiefly from an understanding more brilliant than solid, or from some other cause, the time during which he acted a conspicuous part on the political stage was too short to ascertain. Fertile in devising expedients, rather than wise in choosing the most beneficial ends, Mr. Townshend this session proposed a scheme for raising a revenue from America, which he conceived would be productive, without being objectionable on the same ground as the stamp act. The reader will recollect the alleged difference between external and internal taxation: hastily assuming this principle, Mr. Townshend, with the ardour of inconsiderate ingenuity, deduced from it a theory, and projected a plan to which his specious and brilliant eloquence gave a great appearance of plausibility. He proposed a bill for imposing certain duties on glass, paper, paste board, white and red lead, painters colours, and tea, payable on the importation of these articles into the American colonies; which duties, when collected, were applied to making provision for the administration of justice, and the support of civil government, in the colonies in which it should be necessary; and the residue was to be paid into the exchequer in England. The bill was passed into a law; and, as might easily have been foreseen, was regarded by the Americans as a mere variation of mode, and not a change from the principle that had produced the stamp act: its effects, however, shall be hereafter mentioned,

New im-
posts on
America.

THE conduct of New York underwent severe animadversion in this session of parliament. A new regulation had been made in the preceding session, concerning the quartering of troops in America, and the additional articles of salt, vinegar, beer, or cyder, were required to be furnished by the colonists. The governor of New York communicated this change to the assembly; and the next day some forces, who happened to arrive in the city, found it necessary to apply to them for the accommodation provided by the new law, particularly specifying their requisite articles. The assembly postponed the consideration of the message, and meanwhile furnished the troops with such necessaries as they had before been accustomed to afford, but did not supply the new requisitions. After various messages and addresses, the assembly positively refused, alleging that the principle was exactly the same as of the stamp act, since it taxed them without their own consent. This refusal being represented to parliament, a bill was passed, by which the governor, council, and assembly, were prohibited from passing or assenting to any act of assembly, for any purpose whatsoever, till they had in every respect complied with all the terms of this act of parliament. Unfortunately for the nation, the earl of Chatham, from his ill state of health, could at that time rarely attend either the council or senate: had he possessed his wonted vigour, he might successfully have reprobated such temporizing and trifling measures as merely tended to irritate without being efficient. If America afforded, through our manufactures and trade, a very great revenue, as could be and was proved, it was a puerile policy to hazard its productiveness, rather than let glass and paste board be duty free, and pay for our soldiers the cost of their salt, vinegar, and small beer. There was a littleness in a considerable part of our proceedings respecting America, as inconsistent with the dignity of a powerful, as with the policy of a wise nation. This long and important session closed on the 2d of July 1767.

WHILE so many internal and colonial objects engaged the attention of Britain, she had no reason to apprehend any disturbance of the peace from foreign countries. The French court, soon after the peace, had been occupied in

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between
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and parlia-
ment of
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disputes with the provincial parliaments, in which bodies a spirit of resistance began to manifest itself of a different cast and character from any displayed since the time of Henry IV. The parliament of Brittany having rendered itself peculiarly disagreeable to the monarch, was dissolved, and all its decrees were annulled. The other assemblies showed a disposition to combination and remonstrance; the parliament of Rouen reminded the king of his coronation oath, and intimated, that there was a compact between him and his people; they also made decrees in favour of the parliament of Brittany. The king answered, "The oath which I have taken, is not to the nation, as you presume to say, but to God alone." The several parliaments immediately began to question the royal doctrine and theory, and evinced themselves not disinclined to dispute it in practice; but strong measures repressed their boldness, and in the year 1767 they were tolerably quiet. If Lewis XV. had been so fortunate as to have had for his directors wise, upright, and intrepid advisers, he might even then have been taught to perceive a change in the public sentiment. To meet with safety the new doctrines, would have rendered moderation in the exercise of his power expedient. However imprudently the court might be employed in its proceedings with parliament, in other respects it exerted itself wisely for the encouragement of manufactures, commerce, naval force, and revenue. Agriculture had, by the partial system of Colbert,^g been very much neglected as a subject of political economy; a new set of philosophical economists inculcated its exclusive cultivation, as the sole physical means of prosperity. Extravagant and visionary as they were in their theories, yet the novelty of them made a great impression upon the French, and was to a certain extent useful in making agriculture a much more fashionable and popular pursuit than it had formerly been. France, thus occupied with the schemes of internal improvement, appeared to have no disposition to quarrel with her neighbours; she was more closely than ever connected with Spain, which from a variety of causes was no

^g See Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 4.

less disposed to peace, and her alliance continued unbroken and uninterrupted with the court of Vienna.

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THE emperor Francis was now dead, and succeeded by his eldest son Joseph on the Imperial throne; while Leopold, his second son, filled the place of Joseph as grand duke of Tuscany. The young emperor regarded the king of Prussia with the greatest veneration; and, soon after his accession to the throne, he privately gave Frederic to understand, that he wished every subject of future dispute to be at an end, and desired to cultivate the strictest friendship with his majesty; but he intimated, that it would be necessary to conceal some of his intentions from his mother, who still retained the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria.—The empress dowager found full employment in recovering from the disasters of the war.

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Germany.
Joseph be-
comes em-
peror.

THE king of Prussia, in his political economy, displayed a genius that ensured success in every thing which he chose to pursue. Aware that wealth is the result of productive industry, he was far from imagining those trades always the best which produced the greatest quantity of money. He considered chiefly the physical and moral effects of the work done, upon the workman. He thought that the labour which invigorated the body and imboldened the mind, was more productive of the real constituents of national prosperity, than labour which enervated and relaxed the operator, though the latter might be the more lucrative. “He perceived (says his philosophical biographer) that great differences obtained in populousness and prosperity, according to the various employments of agriculture and manufactures; that even in agriculture, greater exertions and purer manners might be expected from men who cultivate corn, than from those who rear the vine; and that in manufactures, the hardy workmen in wood and metal supplied very different citizens, and very different soldiers, from those furnished by the mechanical operations of sedentary drudgery.”^h In the modern systems of political economy, the short sightedness of avarice regards

Intended
improvement
of
Prussia.

^h Gillies's Frederic, p. 380.

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nothing but the labour effected ; and whether it be effected by machines, or by men little better than machines, appears a matter of small moment. But Frederic, having provided amply for the subsistence and defence of his subjects, thought that he had yet done nothing for their happiness, until he had improved their physical and moral state, procured them rational enjoyments, trained them to virtuous habits, and directed them to useful and honourable pursuits : he imitated the neighbouring nations in the institutions in which they respectively excelled ; his plans of rural economy he formed chiefly on the model of England ; and in dividing unappropriated lands, he adopted the mode of the British parliament. Peace at this time was his main object, although by his financial and military economy he was well prepared for war.

Russia.

THE character of the empress of Russia was now developing itself, and she became conspicuous for the force and solidity of her genius, the extent of her capacity, the greatness of her views, and the adaptation of her measures to the circumstances in which she was placed. Sovereign of an immense empire, she comprehended the state of her dominions ; she saw its resources and susceptibility of improvement ; and, great as its strength was, how much was wanting to make Russia what it might become. The substantial amelioration of her country and people, was the object to which she evidently directed her principal attention. She accurately studied the materials with which she had to work, discriminated the state in which she found the people, accommodated herself to their notions, won their affections and veneration, and by her conduct was as absolute in authority as in power. Dissipated as she might be in her private life, she did not suffer pleasure to interfere with the performances of her Imperial duties. Wishing to promote in her country, commerce, navigation, and all the useful arts, she sought a close correspondence with the most commercial and enlightened nations ; with Britain she concluded a commercial treaty,ⁱ in principle and detail very beneficial to both nations. Desirous also of introducing the elegant

ⁱ See this volume, p. 311.

arts and erudition at her court, she invited thither eminent artists and scholars, and established literary institutions for the advancement of knowledge and science. Although, from the time of czar Peter the great, considerable advances had been made in the internal improvement of Russia, yet that ought to have been much more exclusively the object of her princes and government than it actually had been. Extention of territory was by no means wanting, for her dominions were enormous already. Consummate wisdom would have withheld Catharine from projects of foreign conquest; but that a bold, aspiring princess, with such power, should not project an increase of her territories, was rather to be wished from the highest practical exercise of political philosophy, than to be expected from sovereign ambition, possessing so fully the means of gratification. We have already seen her interference in foreign affairs in the management of Poland; but disturbances were there arising, which soon brought her farther into action, and more openly manifested her encroaching character.

In the south of Europe an event took place this year, of the greatest importance to domestic, civil, religious, and political society; the expulsion of the jesuits from Spain, the country whose superstition had rendered it so much subject to that extraordinary order. The great, energetic, versatile, and skilfully directed ability of that singular fraternity, had extended their authority and power very widely in all Roman catholic countries. Their talents for calling forth abilities, their great skill in every species of political intrigue, and their dexterity in every kind of business, spread their influence among many others beside the gloomy votaries of depressing superstition. Their authority had long been very great amidst the gay splendour of the French court, as well as in the sequestered retirements of Spanish cloisters. But their most incontrollable power was in South America; where it must be admitted; by their efforts among the natives, they contributed very effectually to the civilization and industry of those tribes, though they bore a sway dangerous to any state in the heart of its dominions. The authority acquired by the jesuits in the course of two

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centuries was so exorbitant, that monarchs began to regard them with a very jealous eye. They saw that they really did much incidental good, and were extremely subservient; but that they were acquiring the means of becoming imperious. As in France there was more of united genius and energy than in any other popish country, there first Romish fraternities were attacked. Lewis XIV. had from parade and ostentation cherished literary efforts, though in his time they were chiefly confined to subjects of taste, sentiment, and physical research, without extending to theological and political philosophy. Once set in motion, however, genius would not limit itself to prescribed operations. The very enormous extent to which superstition had carried the influence of the church, attracted sagacious speculatists, who proposed to inquire how far the various privileges claimed, doctrines inculcated, and observances enjoined, by the clergy, were consistent with natural religion, truth, and reason; how far the lives, sentiments, and opinions of churchmen were agreeable to the dictates of virtue and common sense; and how far their system of faith and practice was conducive to the public welfare. They easily discerned, that in the doctrines, institutions, and practices of the Roman catholic church, there were parts totally incompatible with reason, morality, and enlightened policy; but, in the volatile violence of Frenchmen, they carried their animadversions infinitely farther than truth admitted. Confounding religion itself with its abuses, they charged against christianity the errors and mischiefs of popish corruptions; imputing to our Saviour and his apostles, the consequences of the ignorant, superstitious, and usurping institutions of popes and cardinals. Deism, and infidelity of all kinds, became very fashionable in France; and in a prevailing dislike of religious establishments, it was not to be expected that the jesuits should escape; as, beside the imputations common to other monastic orders, there were such strong objections attaching peculiarly to themselves; their principles, their activity, their enterprise, their corporate ambition, and above all, their casuistical morality, leaving a wide field open for palliating every crime. That enmity to the jesuitical order, which

virtue justified, if arising from a sense of the hurtful arts, and policy required, was in fact owing in a great degree to infidelity. But other causes cooperated: the order of jansenists had become very successful, and had acquired great influence; the jesuits were known to be extremely rich, and the public treasures were very much exhausted. Ideas were long entertained, for these various reasons, of suppressing this order; and, in October 1763, they were actually crushed in France and all the French territories. The following year they were suppressed in Portugal and all its dependencies; in Spain they had been suffered to exist some years longer: but the influence of French counsels at the court of Madrid, the example of his neighbours, jealousy of their power, and avidity for their riches, determined Charles to extinguish that order through all his dominions. Accordingly it was in January 1767 ordained, that the jesuits should be expelled, and their whole property seized for the king's use. The jesuits, notwithstanding their sagacity and extraordinary intelligence, had not the least idea that any such scheme was in agitation; and, during the months of February and March, they went on with the usual zeal and ardour in their ordinary occupations, totally unsuspecting of the impending blow that was to crush them forever, where their power had been strongest.

On the 31st of March, about midnight, the six houses of the jesuits in Madrid were surrounded at the same time by detachments of military, who opened the outer doors, secured the bells, and placed a sentinel before each cell. These precautions being taken, the brothers were ordered to rise; and when assembled, being informed of his majesty's commands, they assisted in packing up a few moveables necessary for their journey. Meanwhile a sufficient number of coaches, chaises, and wagons were secured, and without loss of time they were conveyed under a strong guard towards Carthagená. This revolution was conducted with such order and silence, that the inhabitants of Madrid knew nothing of what had taken place till they were informed of it in the morning: three days after, the expulsion and confiscation were carried into execution in every part of Spain, and in the month of

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July in Mexico and Peru. The confiscated estates and effects of the jesuits in Europe and the Indies amounted to above thirty millions sterling: and thus did a government, at one sweep, deprive a corporation, of its subjects, and of an immense property, without any proof of guilt. However just the political reasons for suppressing the order might be, the rapacious seizure of their property was inconsistent with every principle of justice, and could not have taken place under any equitable system of polity. In Naples, and other catholic countries, the jesuits were suppressed with similar circumstances of tyranny.

Death of
the duke
of York,

In the course of this year the royal family of England received a very afflicting blow in the sudden death of the duke of York, eldest brother of the king. His highness had been travelling through France, Germany, and Italy; and at Monaco was seized with a putrid fever, which terminated fatally on the 7th of September. He belonged to the navy, and had served during the war; he was esteemed a prince of good accomplishments, amiable disposition, and affable manners, and was beloved by those who had had the chief access to his confidence and intimacy. He died in the 29th year of his age, and his remains were brought home and interred in Westminster abbey. About the same time, died a gentleman who was rising fast into the first political eminence, the honourable Charles Townshend, chancellor of the exchequer. Lord Chatham's infirmities had for some time almost entirely prevented him from taking any efficient share in administration; during his lordship's inaction, Mr. Townshend, with shining and versatile talents, was the most active member of the ministry, and was taking a lead in the management of affairs. He was a personage of very considerable abilities; prompt, brilliant, witty, and eloquent; not, indeed, very select, either in the measures which he proposed, or the arguments that he employed, but extremely happy in the art of giving the best colour to the sentiments and opinions which he happened to adopt. Although a man of genius, he appears to have been rather more fit for literary than political attainments, or much more anxious about currency of opinions than their weight; he was extremely inconstant. When the stamp act was

and of
Charles
Townshend.

popular in the house, he declaimed in its favour; when it lost its popularity, he voted for the repeal; and when the repeal was afterwards a subject of complaint, he proposed a new plan for raising a revenue. He took no time to form general and comprehensive views, and had no fixed principles of policy. As an orator, he was an ornament to the house of commons; but must have entirely changed his modes and habits, before he could be a very advantageous accession to the councils of his country as a principal statesman.

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MINISTRY was now weak and distracted; various plans of coalition and comprehension, to give it strength, were proposed; but the negotiations were unsuccessful. Several partial changes were made, in which the offices were filled by noblemen and gentlemen connected with the house of Bedford. Lord Weymouth was appointed secretary of state in the place of general Conway, who had been advanced in his professional line. A new office, of secretary of state for the colonies, was created, and bestowed on lord Hillsborough. The earl of Northington, loaded with years, retired from his place of president of the council, and was succeeded by earl Gower. Beside these promotions of the friends of the Russel family, Frederic lord North, eldest son of the earl of Guilford, was made chancellor of the exchequer. The venerable earl of Chatham had been consulted previous to the proposed alterations, and had declared that the state of his health rendered his interference impracticable. He, indeed, had no share in the appointments, and from this time cannot be considered as making one of the Grafton ministry, responsible for any of its acts.—The scarcity of corn continued; and from the distresses of the poor, great riots took place in the manufacturing towns.

Weakness
of adminis-
tration.

ON the 24th of November parliament met. Nothing from abroad (his majesty said) appeared likely to disturb the public tranquillity, or to divert their attention from the internal affairs of the kingdom. The sole object specifically recommended to their notice was, the scarcity and dearth of corn. Interference in the price of provisions on the part of government, is extremely delicate and difficult; nor can the legislature easily adopt any effectual mode

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for that purpose, except by the encouragement of importation in times of exigency, and the promotion of agriculture to prevent their recurrence. Parliament renewed the regulations of the former year, adding to them a bill for importing wheat and flour from Africa; and an act, similar to the law of the preceding session, was passed for limiting the dividends of the East India company.

THE most important measure discussed in this session of parliament was, a law proposed by opposition for limiting the period of resuming crown grants to sixty years. This bill originated in a transaction affecting two private individuals. William III. had made a grant to the first earl of Portland, of the honour of Penrith in the county of Cumberland, with the appurtenances thereunto belonging. The forest of Inglewood, and the manor and castle of Carlisle, were considered as parts of this grant, and had been accordingly enjoyed by the family by the same tenure and in the same quiet possession as the rest. These last tenements, however, were not specified in the grant; and sir James Lowther, being accurately informed of this circumstance, in summer 1767 presented a memorial to the lords of the treasury, stating, that he had discovered that the forest of Inglewood, and the soccage of the castle of Carlisle, had been long withheld from the crown without its receiving any benefit from them, and therefore prayed a lease of three lives. Having consulted the surveyor of crown lands, they granted the possessions in question, notwithstanding the representations of the duke of Portland. His grace now stopped progress in the exchequer office; the cause was tried before the barons of exchequer, and sir James Lowther was nonsuited. Upon this attempted resumption, the bill was founded. Opposition insisted, that the attempt was a revival of the obsolete and tyrannical law, *nullum tempus occurrit regi*, by which no length of time or possession can be a bar against the claims of the crown. The exercise of any right upon this maxim, it was shown, was practised only by the most arbitrary princes, and even by them with caution, as they were sensible of the general abhorrence which every act of the kind excited. It was farther said, that the present grant was founded on a most unconstitutional motive, to obtain a

party and undue influence in the general election ; and that the avowed opposition of interests in the same country between the parties, and the particular connexions of one of them, left no room to doubt that this was the object in view. On the other side it was observed, that the tenements in question were neither specified nor understood in the grant ; that they belonged to the crown, not by resumption (for there had been no alienation), but by original right ; and the crown was no more to blame for taking possession of its own property, than a private person. The earl of Portland and his family had been sufficiently compensated for their services ; and, after seventy years possession of an estate to which they had no right, they might contentedly resign it to the true owner, when there was no demand made upon them for the past issues. Ministry, after finding their arguments against limitation of resumptions not likely to be successful, changed their mode of procedure, and proposed that the bill should be postponed till the next year, and this motion was carried by a majority of twenty ; but the supplies being settled, and other business finished, an end was put to the session ; and, on the tenth of March, parliament was dissolved.

THE first parliament of George III. exhibits no distinguishing marks of legislative wisdom. Its chief objects were, individual prosecution and colonial regulation : respecting Wilkes, and other persons involved in his publications, the majority of its members proceeded with the passion of partisans, and not the cool policy of senators ; and towards America, the conduct of this body was a succession of contradictory measures, neither effectual in coercion nor concession. They irritated, conciliated, and irritated again ; and left the colonies ill-affected to the country, sowing the seeds of the American war. But, though their aggregate policy was either inefficient or hurtful, yet they contained a considerable degree of individual ability. In the latter years, mature and formed eloquence was most conspicuous in the house of peers. In the house of commons, after the death of Mr. Townshend, the ablest orators had not arrived at the perfection which they were severally destined to attain. The eloquence at that time, though brilliant, animated, and impres-

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sive, did not, either in closeness and force of reasoning, comprehensiveness of views, or political philosophy, equal the efforts of more recent periods.

HAVING brought the first British parliament of his majesty to a conclusion, we must now turn our attention to the affairs of Ireland, which, from the commencement of the reign, were of more than usual importance, and since that time had become extremely interesting. To comprehend the passing transactions of the sister kingdom, it is necessary to take a short retrospective survey of causes and events, which powerfully affected the state of the country and the character of the people.

THE Irish were originally sunk in barbarism, far beneath any other inhabitants of middle Europe, even in their most uncivilized ages.^k Never conquered, nor even invaded, by the Romans, they continued still in the most savage state; and were distinguished by those vices, to which human nature is always subject, when it is neither tamed by education, nor restrained by laws. The small principalities into which they were divided, exercised perpetual rapine and violence against each other; the uncertain succession of their princes was a continual source of domestic convulsions; the usual title of each petty sovereign was the murder of his predecessor; courage and force, though exercised in the commission of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific virtues. The most simple arts of life, tillage, and agriculture, were almost wholly unknown. They had felt the invasion of the Danes, and the other northern tribes; but these inroads, which had spread barbarism into the rest of Europe, tended rather to improve the Irish; and the only towns which were to be found in the island, had been planted along the coast by the freebooters of Norway and Denmark. The other inhabitants exercised pasturage in the open country; sought protection from any danger in their forests and morasses; and being divided by the fiercest animosities against each other, were still more intent on the means of mutual injury, than on the expedients of common, or even private interest. So

^k See Strabo, who describes the Irish as infinitely more savage than the Gauls, Germans, or Britons.

situated and disposed, when they were conquered by Henry II., the Irish did not improve from their connexion with a less barbarous nation.

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ALTHOUGH no country had been blessed with a greater proportion of able sovereigns than England, from the time of Henry II. to the reign of Henry VII.; yet no policy could be more absurd and prejudicial, than the system which had been uniformly pursued respecting Ireland. The conquerors not only took no pains to communicate to the conquered their own progressive civilization, but even prevented those advances which the latter might have themselves made. While from the close of the eleventh century, other countries were emerging from that profound ignorance in which Europe was then sunk; that unfortunate island, possessing every natural means of improvement, a climate temperate and salutary, a fertile soil, a maritime situation, numberless harbours, a people sprightly, ready in apprehension, having a fire of ingenuity that beamed through the thick fogs of their ignorance, with every physical, moral, and intellectual capability of improvement, they, from political debasement, were in a condition of stationary savageness. Such men, strangers to arts and industry, were naturally prone to disorder and insurrection. To quell revolt, and prevent its recurrence, Henry VII. proposed the extension of English jurisprudence to the appendent island. Poyning, lord deputy to the king, procured the enactment of that memorable statute, which bears his name, by which all the former laws should be of force in Ireland, and that no bill could be introduced into the Irish parliament, unless it had previously received the sanction of the council of England. The purpose of this ordinance was evidently much more to ensure dominion than to impart civilization; and though the communication of English laws might ultimately tend to infuse a portion of English arts, manners, and industry, yet its direct and immediate tendency was to trench upon Irish independence; and they long continued discontented and turbulent. After the reformation was established in England, theological difference inflamed the discontents. If men so uncultivated possessed any vestiges of christianity, being totally unfit for the genuine

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wisdom and goodness of that divine system, they must have received it with the grossest corruptions which it had acquired from interested imposture, oscitant negligence, or torpid stupidity. "Superstition (says of one "of the glories of that country, after Irish genius "had begun to show its strength and brilliancy¹) is the "only religion of ignorant minds." Devoted to the most abject popery, the Irish, during the reign of Elizabeth, were easily the dupes of all the artifices of the Romish combination: discontent, bursting out in partial insurrection, spread to general rebellion. The vigour and prudence of Mountjoy crushed revolt; but a more difficult task still remained, to civilize the inhabitants, to reconcile them to laws and industry, and to render their subjection durable and useful to the crown of England. King James proceeded in this work by a steady, regular, and well concerted plan, and made greater advances towards the reformation of that kingdom, than had been achieved during the four hundred and forty years which had elapsed since the conquest. The act of Poynings had given authority to English laws, and rendered future statutes of Ireland dependent on the English government, but had not abolished the Irish customs, which supplied the place of laws, and were calculated to keep the people in perpetual barbarism and disorder. Of these usages, the most noted respecting penal proceedings was the *brehon*, by which every crime, even murder itself, was punished, not with death, but by a fine or pecuniary mulct, which was levied upon the criminal. In the distribution of property, the customs of *gavelkind* and *tanistry*, were no less inimical to the purposes of civilized society: the land, by the custom of *gavelkind*, was divided among all the males of the sept or family, both bastard and legitimate; and, after partition made, if any of the sept died, his portion was not shared out among his sons; but the chieftain, at his discretion, made a new partition of all the lands belonging to that sept, and gave every one his share. As no man, by reason of this custom, enjoyed the fixed property of any

¹ Burke.

land; to build, to plant, to enclose, to cultivate, to improve, would have been so much lost labour.^m The tanists, or chieftains, though drawn from the principal families, were not hereditary, but were established by election, or, more properly speaking, by force and violence. Their authority was almost absolute; and, notwithstanding that certain lands were assigned to the office, its chief profits resulted from exactions, dues, and assessments, for which there was no fixed law, and which were levied at pleasure. These customs James abolished, and in their place substituted English law, established circuits, banished oppression, administered justice, ascertained the rules of property, and severely punished crimes and disorders. He did not confine his improvements to the introduction of laws for securing property and punishing crimes, but promoted means of acquiring riches, and preventing enormity. He first endeavoured to stimulate industry, and was peculiarly successful in the province of Ulster, which, having fallen to the crown by the attainder of rebels, was entirely at his disposal. The land was divided into moderate shares, the largest not exceeding 2,000 acres. Many natives of England and of Scotland received grants of estates, and brought from their respective countries tenants, who were capable by skill and industry to cultivate and improve the grounds, and also to practice other useful pursuits. The Irish were removed from the hills and fastnesses, and settled in the open country: husbandry and the arts were taught them; a fixed habitation was secured; plunder and robbery were punished; and, by these means, Ulster, from being the most wild and disorderly province of all Ireland, soon became the best cultivated and most civilized.ⁿ By these wise and prudent measures, James laid the basis of justice, security, and humanity in Ireland; but various obstacles impeded the superstructure, which were principally referable to two sources, property and religion. Long established custom, however absurd, or even pernicious, is extremely difficult to be overcome, especially among barbarians, whose regard to mere usage is in the inverse

^m Hume, vol. v. p. 84.

ⁿ Ibid. p. 85.

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proportion of their liberality and intelligence. The appropriation to individuals of lands, which, according to their ancient custom, belonged to a sept or family, was extremely disagreeable to the Irish. Besides their disapprobation of the new tenure, they were greatly dissatisfied with many of the proprietors, who, possessing the lands which had formerly belonged to communities, were regarded by the aboriginal inhabitants as aliens and interlopers, and a distinction arose between the *new settlers* and the *old Irish*, that long subsisted, and often manifested itself in very fatal effects. Most of the ancient inhabitants continued addicted to the Romish superstition. The liberal spirit of England towards diversities of theological belief, granted to the catholics of Ireland a degree of indulgence almost amounting to a toleration; but so long as the churches and the ecclesiastical revenues were kept from the priests, and they were obliged to endure the neighbourhood of profane heretics, being themselves discontented, they continually endeavoured to prevent the establishment of cordial amity between the English and Irish nations. Instigated by these spiritual directors, as well as inspired with a love of national independence, they ardently desired the expulsion of the English, and waited with impatience for an opportunity of making the attempt. When the Scottish presbyterians began their hostilities against Charles I. and his liturgy, and the English puritans menaced the mitre and the crown, the Irish leaders thought the occasion auspicious to revolt. A conspiracy was formed, for overpowering the English, repossessing the lands of their forefathers, effecting a complete separation between England and Ireland, and reestablishing the catholic religion as paramount and supreme. Actuated by such powerful passions, in pursuing their objects they displayed not only impetuous ardour, but a vigour of ability, and a skilful and comprehensive concert of measures, that demonstrated them to be very far advanced, since the desultory insurrections of the former century. The native genius of the Irish, improved even by partial and reluctant intercourse with the English, evinced the beneficial tendency of the system of James; and their very counsels and efforts to effect a separation, proved the benefits.

that must accrue from the connexion. To the historical reader, who can perceive and combine the mixed uniformity and variations of national character in the progressive stages of knowledge and civility, the Irish conspiracy of the seventeenth century affords subjects of reflection, which are not only important in themselves, but illustrate transactions, pursuits, and conduct in very recent periods. The plot of 1641 was remarkable for unity of design, extensive organization of plan, and secrecy of preparation, from which there might have been expected to follow, firm, cool, and resolute execution; but when it ripened to insurrection, it burst forth with an impetuous fury and atrocity, liker to the blood-thirsty cruelty of savage animals, than the regulated courage of rational creatures seeking momentous objects. More and Maguire, the projectors, were able men, but their associate O'Neal, and the greater portion of their followers, were barbarians, with the violent and uncontrolled passions of rude tribes; which, in any evil direction, were the more mischievous, from the natural sagacity, ingenuity, and force of the Irish character; and which were then stimulated by the interested, bigoted, and infuriated teachers of a gloomy and ferocious superstition. The massacre that ensued, so horrid in its enormities, spread over all the provinces of Ireland, and involved the whole island in guilt. The daring vigour of Cromwell crushed the insurrection of Ireland, and employed plunder and forfeiture, the usual means of military usurpers to reward the instruments of their dominion, and to strengthen present tyranny; little regardless of the real interests and permanent prosperity of possessions which they hold on such a precarious tenure. In the confiscation were comprehended, not only the revolters against the English government, but the loyal partisans of the ill-fated monarch. A more sudden and violent change of property was THEN unknown in the annals of injustice; five millions of acres, which had been wrested from the former proprietors, were divided among the creditors of the anti-monarchical party, and the soldiers of the protector. An order was even issued, to confine all the native Irish to the province of Connaught, where they would be shut up by rivers, lakes, and moun-

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tains; and could not, it was hoped, be any longer dangerous to the English government.^o A policy at once so absurd and inhuman, was a principal cause of subsequent discontents, disorders, and convulsions in Ireland, and very long counteracted the wise and beneficent purposes which the system of James had sought to obtain: the insatiate rapacity of the usurper rendered ineffectual the provident cares and counsels of the lawful king. To redress the grievances of the Irish sufferers, was a great object of the wise counsellors by whom Charles the second was directed in the earlier part of his reign; but it was found an arduous task, either to undo, or compensate, such flagrant and extensive iniquities. The revolutionary soldiers and moneyed speculators could not be dispossessed, because they were the most powerful and only armed part of Ireland; and, besides, it appeared expedient to favour them, in order to support the protestant and English interest in that kingdom, and because they had generally, with a seeming zeal and alacrity, joined in the king's restoration. Charles therefore promised by a proclamation to maintain their settlement, and at the same time to make amends to the innocent sufferers; and proposed to perform this engagement from several funds, but chiefly a quantity of land which was still unappropriated. When the various sources of recompense were accurately examined, they were found totally inadequate to the purpose of indemnification; so that either the present possessors must be disturbed, or the grievances of the ancient proprietors continue without redress: anxiety and alarm seized both the claimants and the holders; the former eager to recover the inheritance of their fathers, the latter afraid to lose, but resolute to retain, their own acquisitions. The duke of Ormond, appointed lord lieutenant, was deemed the most proper person, from prudence and equity, to compromise differences, and reconcile jarring pretensions; and, after encountering various obstacles and difficulties, he at length succeeded in prevailing on the parties to accede to a modification. The Cromwellian possessors agreed to relinquish one-third of their lands,

which was to be distributed among the dispossessed Irish, who had either been entirely innocent of insurrection, or had adhered to the royal family. In the former case, they were compelled to undertake one of the most arduous tasks that can be required in the establishment of truth—the proof of a negative: they were to be presumed guilty, unless they evinced the contrary: they were, besides, debarred from pleading innocence, if they had ever lived in the quarters of rebels. From the wide latitude of constructive guilt, and the difficulty of exculpatory demonstration, many persons free from the crime remained involved in the punishment; and as two-thirds of the lands still were held by persons whom the former proprietors regarded as usurpers, they deemed themselves the victims of injustice. These sentiments were not confined to actual sufferers, but diffused among their friends and connexions, and incorporating with the spirit of national independence and popery, overspread the ancient Irish. There were now in Ireland two great parties, in the nature of things reciprocally hostile: the present holders, attached to the English government, whose power only could secure their possessions; and the expelled descendants of the ancient owners, who were inimical to that government which they conceived to preclude the vindication of their rights. In both, interest and religion went hand in hand. The new proprietors, chiefly of English extraction, were generally protestants, and the ejected Irish, catholics. The mild and equitable administration of Ormond, however, prevented the discordant spirit from immediately bursting out in renewed insurrection. His great object was, impartially and equitably to promote the good of all classes, whether protestants or catholics, and to engender in both, a disposition to conciliation. In the latter years of Charles, the expectations that were entertained from a popish successor, distinguished for ardent zeal, cooperated with the wisdom of Ormond, in preventing the catholics from attempting to disturb the English government of Ireland. The furious bigotry of James overleaped every bound of true policy; and, without any preparation or precaution, eagerly endeavoured to reestablish the catholic religion in intolerant

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supremacy, annulled protestant charters and corporations, filled the offices of state with Romanists, and gave the supreme direction of affairs to Tyrconnel, as violent a bigot as himself. The protestants in great numbers left the kingdom, and the interests of England in the sister island were almost totally destroyed, when the frantic folly of James gave way to the ability of William. The Irish catholics strenuously embraced the interest of the exiled king, and hoped that his restoration would both reestablish the Romish religion, and enable them to regain all the lands now occupied by protestants. Repossession and religion being the chief purposes of their adherence to the popish prince, they combated with their usual impetuosity, and butchered with their usual fury; but, after a bloody contest and repeated defeats, the insurgents were finally overcome by the disciplined valour of English soldiers. Having the rebels at his feet, William perceived the policy which wisdom dictates towards reduced rebels, who may be reclaimed and rendered useful subjects; and at the celebrated treaty of Limerick, granted to the Irish catholics what they considered as the great charter of civil and religious liberties, and allowed an amnesty for the past, on their swearing allegiance for the future; allowing those who were dissatisfied with the present government, to retire into other countries. Various forfeitures having fallen to the crown before this capitulation, the king gratified the friends of the English government with a part of the confiscations, but remitted a considerable portion; and adopted conciliation, as the means which would render the two kingdoms reciprocally beneficial. Great pains were employed to spread industry and the arts; the intercourse of Ireland with England and Scotland, no longer interrupted by rebellions, being rapidly increased, taught and encouraged manufactures, and promoted husbandry. The Irish, ingenious and intelligent, readily comprehended the lessons they received; and, in some parts of the island, employed perseverance and industry, and felt the strength and resources which their country contained, if they were steadily and judiciously employed. During the reign of Anne they

grew in prosperity, and appeared to be well satisfied with the English government.

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IN the reign of George I. a law was passed, making a very material change in the relation between Great Britain and Ireland, and rendering the sister kingdom much more dependent upon Britain, than even the statute of Poynings had proposed; and whereas that lawgiver had procured a negative and preventive control over Irish legislation, the bill of George I. gave a positive and enacting power, and also established the subjection of Irish courts of justice to the corresponding tribunals of England. This change passed without much animadversion at the time, though it was destined to be afterwards a very important subject of discussion and correction. The Irish in that reign appear to have been chiefly engaged by the interests of their new commerce, from which may be derived their violent opposition to Wood's halfpence. The growing trade of Ireland was regarded by many of the English with an unfounded jealousy, as they apprehended from its increase a competition of commercial interests; and the legislature of Britain clogged the industry of Ireland with various restrictions, which were extremely injudicious, immediately injurious to Irish, and ultimately to British, prosperity.

IN the reign of George II. the incumbrances were partially removed; wool and woollen yarn were allowed to be imported both to Scotland and England; afterwards cattle and tallow, salted beef and pork, obtained the same permission. At one period there arose a contest between the government and the Irish house of commons respecting privilege and prerogative, in the application of the surplus of revenue, which the commons conceived they had a right to appropriate without the consent of the crown. Popular orators operating on the fiery spirit of the Irish, the dispute became extremely violent; and though afterwards quieted by the skilful application of government to the leaders of most influence with the people, yet the seeds of dissatisfaction still remained, and the persons most keenly in opposition to government acquired proportionate popularity. The duke of Newcastle, agreeably to the general rule of his policy, sought to govern

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Ireland by a junto, composed of men of family or official influence. Another body of men assumed the name of patriots; they professed to make the commercial benefit and political rights of their country the great objects of their pursuits, and to reprobate every measure or practice that appeared to lessen the political or commercial benefits of Ireland; they inveighed against the powers asserted by the British government, the restrictions upon trade, and the expenses of the pension list, and cooperated with any party or individual that happened to be in opposition to administration. Conceived to be sincere in their professions of patriotism, they were revered by the populace, who received their representations as the oracles of truth, and at the death of George II. a spirit of disaffection and discord was manifest in many parts of Ireland.

GEORGE III. proposed to govern Ireland as well as Britain without any regard to party distinctions; but, in the first year of his reign, the animosities were inflamed to a very high pitch, by a dispute about a money bill. In October 1761, his majesty sent as lord lieutenant the earl of Halifax, who was esteemed well qualified by united vigour and prudence for supporting the rights of the crown, and conciliating the affections and promoting the interests of the people. In his speeches to the legislature, and in his executorial conduct, he endeavoured to soften and banish animosities, to promote unanimity, to recommend and enforce the improvement of agriculture and manufactures, and to encourage the education of youth, and the diffusion of useful knowledge. But the very progress of husbandry produced discontents and commotions among many of the ignorant people, who had neither discernment to understand improvements, nor patience to await results. Parties of men assembled to destroy enclosures, under the pretext of restoring commons to the poor, and committed various outrages: the insurgents wearing over their clothes a white frock, thence received the name of *white boys*, that afterwards became so noted and terrible. These banditti secured their union, and increased their numbers, by oaths of secrecy, an organized plan, and by inflicting the severest cruelties on all who refused cooperation. During the year 1763, they carried

their atrocities to so alarming a height, as to call the attention of parliament; but no effectual measures were adopted for their suppression. Convened for the purpose of rescinding the muniments of property, they attacked rights and establishments of various kinds, and were peculiarly resolute in the refusal of tithes. The professed patriots, by exclaiming against the pension list and other alleged abuses, and calling loudly for reform at a season when the public ferment and the violence of the populace were so unfavourable to such discussions, tended to inflame the disorders; and the spirit of dissatisfaction, which was so industriously spread through Britain, acted also powerfully in Ireland.

In the houses of parliament, a regular and systematic opposition was now formed to the measures of government. It consisted of two classes: individuals of great personal popularity; and a combination of family connexion and political union. This band, headed by lord Shannon and the house of Ponsonby, was nearly akin, in principles and views of government, to the Rockingham party in England; with whom its several members maintained a close intercourse, consolidated in various instances by relation and affiance. These may without impropriety be termed the whig confederacy of Ireland; and, in the successive political changes, joined and cooperated with the corresponding body in Britain. In parliament, a considerable subject of debate was the origination of money bills. Hitherto measures of finance were proposed by the privy council of England and sent to the Irish house of commons, which had merely a power of refusal. In 1764, Mr. Pery, one of those members who claimed the merit of patriotism, proposed, that propositions of aids should spring from the commons. The mover was strenuously supported by Mr. Ponsonby and his adherents; and though his proposition was not passed into a law, yet its principle and spirit deserve the attention of the historical reader, as manifesting a disposition to assimilate the Irish constitution to the British, and consequently lessen the dependence of Ireland.

In 1766, a more important and comprehensive scheme was tried for effecting a similarity to the polity of Britain.

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The parliament of Ireland at this time was subject to dissolution only by the demise of the crown, or the exercise of the kingly prerogative. Several attempts had been made, during the preceding four years, to render their duration septennial, but were rejected by the Irish legislature; a new bill being now introduced, passed the Irish parliament, but was rejected in Britain. Soon after, lord Chatham, who had received the direction of English affairs, and his friend lord Camden, declared themselves favourable to the limited duration of the Irish parliament. Charles Townshend agreed to this opinion, and his brother viscount Townshend was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland. Instead of a septennial, an octennial law was recommended. The new viceroy repaired to his government in October 1767, and a bill for limiting the duration of parliament to the period of eight years, was proposed, speedily and unanimously passed, and received by the people with a joy and gratitude that demonstrated the eagerness of their desire to obtain the benefits which were possessed and secured under the British constitution.

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Prevalent discontents.—Mr. Wilkes returns from exile—offers himself candidate for London—rejected—chosen for Middlesex—prosecuted at the instance of ministers—tried before lord Mansfield—sentenced to the king's bench prison—popular invectives against the judge.—Riots in St. George's fields.—Wilkes's outlawry reversed.—King of Denmark visits Britain.—Favourite studies of his Britannic majesty.—Voyages of discovery and science.—Capt. Cook.—Mr. Banks.—Affairs on the continent.—Parties in Poland.—Dissidents.—Interference of Prussia and Russia.—Conduct of Austria—of France.—Rupture between Russia and Turkey.—American colonies enraged at Mr. Townshend's new impost.—Province of Massachusetts more active in resistance.—New combination against British commodities.—Lord Hillsborough the secretary of state, his letter to the governors of their respective provinces.—Riots at Boston—England.—Dissatisfaction and licentiousness.—Wilkes inflames the discontent.—Supported by the chief citizens of the metropolis.—Lord Chatham resigns the privy seal.—Parties mutually adverse, concur in opposition to administration.

WISE and liberal as was the policy of our king, which sought to govern by virtue and ability instead of a party confederacy, it had not hitherto attained the merited success. The royal plan had to encounter obstacles which partly arose from particular incidents and characters, but were chiefly owing to general causes.

THE long supremacy of the whig combination had conferred on its members, in the public opinion, a prescriptive right to govern. When Pitt adopted the project of Bolingbroke, or more probably followed the natural course of transcendent talents, he was aware of the authority which the junto had acquired: he well knew that political

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changes ought to be gradual, and accommodated to the opinions and sentiments of the times. He therefore did not propose entirely to exclude the phalanx; but, without admitting their command, to enjoy their assistance. Even this partial invasion they bore with impatience, and only from the overpowering force of genius did they bear it at all: Pitt's administration afforded strong proofs, that a change of political system must be gradual, and that the projected alteration would be arduous, unless preeminent ability guided and invigorated the execution. The earl of Bute attempted a more extensive and rapid change, than befits the progressive variations of human affairs: in seeking a reform agreeable to reason and justice, he failed, by precipitation and the want of superior talents. His personal unpopularity was prejudicial to any scheme which he could undertake, and his successors (long conceived to be his tools) partook of the prevalent hatred, which was farther increased by their internal and colonial measures. The administration of Rockingham courted popularity, but in its weakness and inefficiency demonstrated, that the whig phalanx was fallen in strength: still, however, it was not dissolved. Pitt tried the experiment of governing without the whig connexion; but found, that either the attempt was premature, or that the execution required more vigorous exertion than the infirm state of his health permitted him to employ. Feeble as a ministry, the combination of whigs was a powerful body of opposition; and others, not of their *sept*, united with them in thwarting the measures of government. The earl of Chatham ceased to be an active member of his majesty's councils; and instead of the union of talents that the sovereign sought and the statesman proposed, there was in the cabinet a weakness and distraction, which excited the censure of the patriotic, and encouraged the hopes of the ambitious. The notion of a secret cabal continued to prevail, and had its share in giving spirit and strength to anti-ministerial efforts. From these causes, and not from any disloyal acrimony, seems to have arisen the opposition to government, which forms so very prominent a feature in the early history of our sovereign. Besides, the immense augmentation of trade and opulence in the preceding

reign, had raised the moneyed capitalists to a much greater degree of importance, than at any former period they had attained. Always connected with the whigs, the mercantile body entered into their present views, and imputed to evil and unconstitutional motives, the interference of the monarch with their political monopoly. They were farther dissatisfied with the measures adopted towards America, which had eventually proved so detrimental to trade. The citizens of London exchanged their former zeal in favour of the house of Brunswick, for violent enmity to the successive servants whom their king chose to employ, and were foremost in supporting every turbulent individual who attacked administration. Such was the spirit now raised into a strong fermentation by the general election.

To prevalent discontents, an individual case proved a very formidable addition. Mr. John Wilkes had applied to the Rockingham party when in administration, for patronage and redress; but the terms which he proposed, a general pardon, 5000*l.* in cash, and a pension on the Irish establishment, were totally inadmissible; and his confident presumption was not only disappointed in its extravagant expectations, but prevented the amnesty which modest humility might have procured. When the duke of Grafton became prime minister, the hopes of Mr. Wilkes again revived. He had been extremely intimate with that nobleman, and expected friendship from their former social and convivial intercourse, as well as patronage from the whig principles which the minister professed. He wrote a letter to the duke, congratulating his grace and the country on his promotion, and entreating his mediation with the king. This petition, however, was entirely neglected by the duke; and Mr. Wilkes's hope of pardon vanishing, he resolved to attack his adversaries with the keenest severity. On the dissolution of parliament, coming from Paris, he proposed himself as a candidate to represent the city of London. The conduct of the court was in this case altogether irresolute and feeble; while prudence dictated determined measures, either of rigour or of lenity. If they determined on severe justice, by immediately enforcing his sentence of outlawry, this could have driven him back to banishment, and forever crushed his

Return of
Wilkes.

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He is chosen for
Middlesex.

projects either of ambition or revenge: if the more magnanimous and wiser alternative of mercy had been adopted by a full pardon, his influence and popularity would have ceased with the prosecution from which they sprung. But ministers embraced half measures, the usual offspring of imbecility, and parent of disappointment. Known to be odious to the court, Wilkes was received by the people with rapturous applause. Mr. Harley, the lord mayor, being in the interest of the court, prevented Wilkes from being chosen for the city; whereupon he immediately offered himself for Middlesex. Adored by the freeholders of a county which, from its adjacency to the metropolis, speedily catches its spirit; supported by the most opulent men in the city and the ablest at the bar, after a riotous and tumultuous election, the popular candidate was returned by a very great majority. Meanwhile, a legal process was carried on against him upon the former charges: he was tried, sentenced to imprisonment for two years, obliged to procure security for his good behaviour for seven years, and sentenced to pay a fine of a thousand pounds. A trifling alteration in the judicial records was magnified by popular clamour into the most flagrant and oppressive injustice. It had been a common and unchallenged practice with the judges, when requested by the prosecutor, to amend informations, in order to add to their clearness and precision. At the instance of the treasury solicitor, lord Mansfield had suffered the word *purport*, in the information against Mr. Wilkes, to be erased, and the word *tenor* to be substituted. This change, perfectly consistent with law and usage, and which could not have the smallest weight in criminating the defendant, was represented as an iniquitous measure, flowing from the arbitrary principles and designs which were imputed to the chief justice as a Scotchman, and a friend of lord Bute. Extremely enraged at the judgment passed upon their favourite, the populace forcibly rescued him from the officers who were conducting him to prison, and carried him triumphantly through the streets; but Mr. Wilkes, that he might not appear a party in this violence, as soon as the mob was dispersed, prudently surrendered himself to the marshal of the king's bench.

THE new parliament met on the 10th of May, and was opened by the lord chancellor; who, in a speech, informed the house, that his majesty had not called them together at that unusual season of the year for the purpose of general business, but merely to despatch certain parliamentary proceedings necessary for the welfare of his subjects, especially the renewal of the acts against the exportation of corn, which were then on the eve of expiring.

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ON the day on which the parliament met, great numbers of persons assembled in St. George's fields, expecting to see Mr. Wilkes go from prison to the house of commons. The mob becoming very outrageous, the Surry magistrates, when unable to preserve the public peace, were obliged to read the riot act, and call in the military to assist the civil power. Instead of separating, the populace insulted and attacked the soldiers: the legal time for dispersion being elapsed, force was found absolutely necessary; the soldiers were ordered to fire; and, as in a mob it is impossible to distinguish active outrage from idle curiosity, a man who had not been riotous was unfortunately killed: this was Allen, who, though humble and obscure in life, was from his death consecrated to perpetual remembrance by the pen of elegant invective, poignant acrimony, and impressive misrepresentation: several others also were unavoidably killed. On the 17th of May, a proclamation was issued, by order of the council, for suppressing tumults and unlawful assemblies. Both houses of parliament thanked his majesty for this measure, and united in expressing their approbation of the magistrates who had been active in quelling the disturbances: and lord Weymouth wrote a letter, by his majesty's command, to the justices for Surry, which testified the utmost satisfaction with the conduct both of the magistrates and the troops in suppressing lawless disturbances. Samuel Gillam esq. one of the justices, was tried on a charge of having murdered William Redburn, by having ordered the soldiers to fire; in consequence of which, Redburn had been killed. The jury, seeing the absurdity and the injustice of such a prosecution, would not suffer the

Riot in St.
George's
fields.

a See Junius, *passim*.

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Wilkes's
outlawry is
reversed.King of
Denmark
visits Eng-
land.

accused to take the trouble of entering upon his defence; but, when the prosecutor's evidence was closed, pronounced a verdict of acquittal. Donald Maclean, a soldier, was tried for the murder of Allen; but being proved to have acted only in discharge of his duty, he was acquitted. The mob was very much displeased with this sentence; and, as Maclean was either known, or from his name presumed to be, a Scotch highlander (and consequently the countryman of lord Bute), the clamour was the more loud and outrageous. Mr. Wilkes applied to the court of king's bench for a reversal of his outlawry, as irregular and illegal; and, after many learned arguments on both sides, the judges unanimously delivered their opinion, that the sentence was illegal, and must be reversed.

ON the 13th of May the king lost his second sister, the princess Louisa Anne, in the twentieth year of her age. In the course of the summer, the king of Denmark, under the title of the prince Travendahl, visited England; and, arriving in London, was honoured with every possible mark of respect and distinction, and entertained at court with all the princely magnificence which befitted the guest and the host. Having viewed every thing most worthy of notice in the metropolis, his Danish majesty made a tour to York; and visiting Cambridge, was received by that learned body with all the discriminating attention of lettered politeness. He returned by Oxford; where his reception was no less pleasing to the monarch. Arriving again in London, he honoured the lord mayor with his company to dinner, and expressed high satisfaction and admiration at the hospitality of the most opulent body of the most opulent nation in the universe. Having remained two months in the kingdom of his brother-in-law, he departed for his own. Little indebted to nature for either brilliant or vigorous talents, yet by a comely countenance and figure, in the bloom of youth, and by pleasing and affable manners, added to his rank, and connexion with the British royal family, the Danish king became extremely popular during his stay in England.

OUR sovereign had from his youth devoted a great portion of his attention to philosophical experiments, sci-

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Favourite studies of his Britannic Majesty. Voyages of discovery and science.

entific inquiries, and the consequent arts, both curious and useful; he had applied himself particularly to geography, astronomy, and other subjects connected with navigation; a study peculiarly momentous to the realms over which he was destined to reign. Soon after the conclusion of the peace, the king projected a voyage of discovery to the South Sea; and in July 1764, the Dolphin ship of war and the Tamar frigate were equipped for this purpose, under captain Byron, with captain Mowat second in command. Arriving off Patagonia, they were astonished at the stature of the inhabitants, which rose to a gigantic height. They afterwards descried Falkland's islands, and finding a harbour extremely commodious, entered it, took possession both of the port and surrounding islands in the name of the king, and called the haven Port Egmont, in compliment to the nobleman who was then at the head of the admiralty. Entering the Pacific Ocean, they sailed to Batavia, whence they returned by the cape of Good Hope, and anchored in the Downs in May 1766; having circumnavigated the world in a year and ten months. His majesty lost no time in farther prosecuting the discovery of unexplored parts of the physical and moral world; and the Dolphin was immediately refitted, and sent out in August 1766, under the command of captain Samuel Wallis, accompanied by two frigates, the Prince Frederic and the Swallow. Wallis having entered the Pacific, took a different direction from captain Byron, (who had first sailed north and then west,) and proceeded diagonally almost in the hypotenuse of his predecessor's track. This course brought the British voyagers to an island, which presented man under a different aspect from any in which he had been hitherto seen by Europeans. This was the place now so well known under the name of Otaheite. The manners of the inhabitants exhibited a combination of savage ignorance and voluptuous effeminacy, never before seen together in the same national character. The incivilization of the North American Indians, with the mildness of Gentoos, and the licentious lewdness of Moorish masters of Harams, constituted the character of the islanders whom captain Wallis now discovered. Partly by intimidation, but still more by attention, he ob-

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Captain
Cook.

Mr. Banks.

Affairs of
the conti-
nent.

tained a very favourable reception. In a year and nine months, having made very important accessions to our knowledge of the habitable globe, he finished his circumnavigation. The existence of these islands being ascertained, his majesty's next desire was to explore their resources, and prosecute discovery. It had been long before calculated, that the planet Venus would pass over the sun's disk in 1769; and one of the South Sea islands within the tropic of capricorn was reckoned the most commodious station for observing the phenomenon: so that one object of the voyage was astronomical improvement, though it comprehended several others. The command of this expedition was conferred on lieutenant James Cook, who was not only distinguished as a skilful navigator and gallant officer, but as a mathematician and astronomer. Other men of science and philosophical research were prevailed on to accompany Cook: among these were, Joseph Banks, esq. a gentleman of talents and fortune, who had from his early youth employed his abilities and wealth in improving his understanding, enlarging the boundaries of human knowledge, and increasing the resources of human wants: conversant in the various branches of literature and science, he had bestowed peculiar attention on natural history, natural philosophy, botany, mineralogy, and chymistry; and was therefore a most important coadjutor for advancing purposes of physical discovery. Dr. Solander, a Swede of great ingenuity and learning, and deeply skilled in mathematics and natural philosophy, likewise joined this expedition; and Mr. Charles Green, the colleague of Dr. Bradley the royal astronomer, conducted the astronomical part of the undertaking. Thus an expedition was projected, which tended not only to promote observation and discovery, but deduction and science; and this was the first voyage ever undertaken upon such grand and philosophical principles. The honour of first planning an expedition for the advancement of science, was reserved for the reign of George III.

On the continent, several disputes disturbed the general tranquillity. The changes which the different princes were making in ecclesiastical affairs; were reprobated by

the pope. The king of Spain having banished the jesuits, circumscribed the power of the clergy, and especially of that detestable instrument of bigoted tyranny, the inquisition; he reformed the church and universities, and suffered the press to be no longer subject to ecclesiastics, but rendered it amenable to civil authority only; he prohibited appeals to the pope, but in extraordinary cases; or any order from the court of Rome to be put in execution, unless sanctioned by the king and council: thus, instead of the pope, the sovereign became head of the national church. The king of Naples was engaged in a similar reduction of clerical power: the dominions of the duke of Parma were subject to ecclesiastical privileges and immunities still more exorbitant than those which were allowed in other countries by the deluded votaries of superstition, that prince therefore resolved, instead of longer submitting to the authority of slavish bigotry, to follow the dictates of sound policy and reason. He accordingly prohibited any appeal to be carried to the pope, reduced the power and immunities of the church, and ordained that all benefices should be held without any dependence on a foreign priest. The pope tried his decrees, briefs, and bulls, but they had lost their efficacy. The other popish states seconded the efforts of the Bourbon princes. The king of France reclaimed the territories of Avignon and Venaissin, in the heart of France, which had been ceded to the pope in the days of superstition. The pope employed his own papal machinery to prevent the resumption, but to no purpose: the French king took possession of the territories.

diminution
of papal
influence.

FRANCE about the same time made, by a negotiation with Genoa, another acquisition. The Genoese having long tried to no purpose to reduce Corsica, concluded a treaty, by which they transferred the sovereignty of that country to the king of France; and a body of troops was embarked at Toulon for the island, which it was expected would acknowledge, without resistance, the claims of so powerful a monarch: but those expectations proved eventually groundless.

WHILE these transactions were going on in the south and west of Europe, the north and east was far from being

Parties in
Poland.

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VII.

1766.

Dissidents.

Interference of
Russia and
Prussia.

tranquil. Stanislaus began his reign with meritorious and judicious efforts to meliorate the internal administration and condition of Poland, and to rescue her from dependence upon foreign powers; but he had to encounter very formidable obstacles both from within and without. There were in that country two great divisions of religionists: the catholics, whose worship was established by law; and the dissidents, including Greeks, protestants, and every class of dissenters, who were not only tolerated, but had a vote in the national diet, and shared in other political privileges, by a constitution established in 1660. The catholics, however, having gradually become more powerful than before, gave way to their intolerant spirit, and oppressed and prosecuted the dissidents, whose legal privileges could not protect them from lawless power. The clergy were extremely dissatisfied with one privilege enjoyed by the dissidents; which was, an exemption from the payment of tithes. Clerical avarice and ambition stimulated the stupid enthusiasm of the populace against the nonconformists, and by their ascendancy in the diet, encroached on their immunities. The dissidents applied to the two chief protestant sovereigns, and the chief Greek monarch, to interfere in their behalf. The court of London, too distant from the scene, could only mediate by its ambassador. Prussia and Russia were disposed and able to intercede much more effectually. Both Catharine and Frederic had formed most ambitious views respecting Poland; and in the application of the dissidents, a plausible pretext offered itself for their interference. Whatever might be their real sentiments concerning christianity, they were both too able politicians, not to support the religious faith whose establishment they found beneficial to their dominions. Catharine, head of the Greek church, avowed herself its supporter and defender; and Frederic avowed himself the champion of the protestant doctrine. Both these sovereigns announced their intention of protecting their brethren in religious belief; and the czarina actually sent a body of troops to promote the success of her mediations. The Russian forces seized the bishop of Cracow, primate of Poland, with the bishop of Kiar, and a few others of the most active enemies of the dissi-

Jews, and sent them to Petersburg; where, without any trial, they, by the arbitrary pleasure of Catharine, were subjected to rigorous imprisonment, in a country against which they could not be rebels, because they owed it no allegiance. The kindred theology of Maria Teresa was roused in behalf of the Polish catholics. France then governed by the duke of Choiseul, though very little under the influence of superstition, was prompted by policy to attempt the repression of Russian and Prussian influence in Poland. The empress queen prepared a force to assist the catholics; but Frederic notified to her, that if any of her soldiers marched into that country, he would immediately invade Bohemia; and Maria Teresa, not being equal to such a contest, made no attempt to fulfil her intentions. The influence of the protestant courts, and still more the menaces of the Russian army, obtained, in the beginning of 1768, an edict, confirming all the privileges of the dissidents.

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VII.

1768.

Conduct of
Austria,
and of
France.

THE French, though they did not themselves engage in hostilities with Catharine, exerted all their intriguing policy to blow the flames of discord. Their plan of annoying Russia divided itself into three branches: they encouraged the Poles to form a new confederacy; they caballed at Stockholm to change the government, in order to render the king, who was under their influence, absolute; and their emissaries at Constantinople endeavoured to rouse the jealousy of the grand signor against Catharine. A fresh confederacy of catholics having been formed in summer 1768, annulled the late laws, and adopted resolutions for opposing Russia, and dethroning^b Stanislaus. The Russian troops quartered in Poland defeated the army of the confederates, pursued them to the eastern frontier, and burned the Turkish town of Balta, in which the insurgents had taken shelter. Already predisposed by France to enmity with Russia, the Turks considered this act as a hostile aggression; they sent Catharine's ambassador prisoner to the fortress of the Seven Towers, and in the beginning of October declared war against Russia.

Rupture
between
Russia and
Turkey.

In the American colonies, the act proposed by Mr. Townshend for fixing duties on certain articles of merchan-

Discon-
tents in
America.

^b See Gillier's Frederic, p. 399.

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especially
Massachu-
setts.

dise, excited very great resentment; while the obvious proofs of weak and wavering policy in the British government, encouraged them to resistance. It was easy to perceive, that the principle of the new law was the same as of Mr. Grenville's stamp act, *to tax the colonies, without their own consent, expressed by themselves or their representatives.* This identity of object their political writers soon painted in the most striking colours; Mr. Townshend's impost (they said) was in every respect as unconstitutional as the stamp act; the mother country seemed determined to crush the colonies; resistance was therefore a duty which the Americans owed to themselves and to posterity. These arguments coincided with the sentiments and prepossessions of the people, in exciting opposition; and the province of Massachusetts bay was the most active in promoting resistance. The first public mark of dissatisfaction on account of this act, was shown at Boston on the 27th of October 1767, when the inhabitants, assembling in their town hall, agreed to form associations for encouraging manufactures among themselves, discountenancing luxuries of every kind, and discontinuing^a such articles of importation from Britain as were not absolutely necessary. The other colonies adopted the same, or framed similar resolutions. In January 1768, the provincial assembly of Massachusetts having met, immediately entered on a general and full consideration of grievances;^d and prepared a petition to the king, complaining of every statute passed since the year 1763, for imposing duties on America. They instructed their agent in England, to controvert the justice and prudence of these acts, on the grounds of natural equity, constitutional right, and commercial and political expediency. They also sent letters to the several ministers, to the marquis of Rockingham, the earl of Chatham, and lord Camden, which entreated the exertion of their abilities and influence in promoting the objects of the petition to his majesty. Toward the other colonies they employed the same sagacious policy, which they had successfully exerted in opposing the stamp act; they excited a spirit of confederation, and they sent a

^a Stedman, p. 159.^d See Stedman, vol. i. p. 59.

circular letter, which communicated the proceedings of the assembly, invited the other provinces to follow their example, and requested similar communications of measures necessary or useful for the common cause. The colonists of Massachusetts, indeed, exerted great depth of political ability; for aware that considerable differences of principles and sentiments prevailed between most of the other provinces and themselves, they endeavoured to amalgamate opinion and feeling, by giving them unity of object. This was the system of means, which the New Englanders uniformly pursued. Unfortunately, at this period, the steadiness of policy, adapted to its object, formed a striking contrast with the fluctuating measures of the British government. Sir Francis Bernard, the governor of Massachusetts, was a man, neither by conciliation fitted to dissolve their concerts, nor by vigour to counteract their schemes. He was on very bad terms with the assembly, who charged him with having misrepresented their conduct to the British government, while he reproached them with rebellious stubbornness. This reciprocation of invective, resembling the angry brawlings of private litigants, rather than discussions befitting his majesty's representative and a constitutional assembly of his subjects, widened the breach. Bernard sent to ministers a copy of the circular exhortation, which increased their displeasure against the New Englanders. Lord Hillsborough wrote a letter to the several governors of the colonies, to be laid before the respective assemblies: he condemned the conduct of Massachusetts, as tending to promote an unwarrantable combination against the authority of parliament, and admonished the other colonies to disregard such disloyal suggestions. He instructed Bernard to require the assembly to rescind the resolution which had issued such an inflammatory paper; and, in case they should refuse, he was directed to dissolve the meeting. Not satisfied with opposing innovations, the Bostonians riotously resisted an authority acknowledged by themselves. The sloop Liberty belonging to John Hancock, had arrived in Boston harbour, laden with wine; the master of the vessel having in vain attempted to bribe a customhouse officer to let him smuggle his cargo ashore,

Lord Hillsborough's letter.

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1768.

Outrages at
Boston.

at last locked him up by force in the cabin, sent the cargo ashore, and reladed the ship before the morning. Information of this illegal and outrageous act having been given at the customhouse, the collector, seizing the sloop, committed her to the care of the Romney ship of war. On perceiving this movement, a mob assembled, buffeted and pelted the collector and controller of the customs, attacked the houses and threatened the persons of the commissioners, and compelled them to take refuge in Castle William, a fortress commanding the mouth of the harbour. The governor applied to the assembly for their advice and assistance, but received neither: A town meeting, so far from discountenancing the outrage, presented a remonstrance on the seizure of the sloop. Thus both the provincial assembly and the town of Boston showed, that, though the acts of parliament of which they complained might be unconstitutional grievances, they had resolved to resist legitimate and constitutional authorities. The governor persisted in urging them to rescind the obnoxious resolution of the preceding session; but, as they would not comply, he agreeably to his directions, dissolved the assembly. The British ministry, informed of the late outrages, ordered troops to Boston to aid the civil power. The Bostonians, informed of the destination of the soldiers, entreated the governor to convene the general assembly; but Bernard answered, that he had dissolved the assembly by command of his majesty, and could not call another without the king's orders. The Bostonians, disappointed in their expectation, formed the daring resolution of assembling a provincial convention, which body met on the 22d of September, drew up a petition to the king against the late acts of parliament; but disclaimed all pretence to authority, stated the causes of their meeting, exhorted the people to pay deference to government, and promised to aid the civil power in maintaining tranquillity. Rendered more mild in their conduct by the approach of the soldiers, they dissolved their meeting the very day on which the first division of the troops arrived at Boston; and the tumultuous spirit of the people being thus restrained, quietness was reestablished. The assembly of New York having submitted to the terms of the

ministry act, were restored to their legislative functions. The other colonial assemblies, guided by the circular letter of Massachusetts, and regardless of the British minister's admonitions, resolved to prohibit the importation of the enumerated articles, and directed the prohibition to begin from the first of January 1769.

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In England, the dissatisfaction and licentiousness of the people continued to increase. Mr. Wilkes nourished the discontent, by publishing lord Weymouth's letter to the Surry magistrates, and prefixing to it a seditious preface. A great part of the people charged all the disturbances in America to the folly and wickedness of ministry; but there was a faction out of parliament, that proceeded to a degree of licentiousness which was inimical to the existence of regular government, and its most active partisans received too much encouragement from many opulent citizens in the metropolis. The opposition in parliament still consisted chiefly of two parties, the adherents of Mr. Grenville, and the connexions of the marquis of Rockingham,* who, though adverse to each other, agreed in voting against ministry. The earl of Chatham, the founder of the present ministry, borne down with infirmities, and totally disapproving of the measures of his colleagues, had long withdrawn from public business, and lately resigned his office of lord privy seal. The duke of Grafton, though first lord of the treasury, had been intended to act only a secondary and subordinate part, as in the same office the duke of Newcastle had done, during the splendid period of Mr. Secretary Pitt's administration. As the health of lord Chatham rendered him unequal to the exertions of his earlier years, the duke of Grafton actually became prime minister. The talents of this nobleman did not exceed mediocrity, nor was he mature in political experience. So qualified, he was thrust by accident, rather than exalted by design, into a situation, to fill which, in the distracted state of affairs, required a minister of consummate abilities and wisdom. Lord

Dissatisfaction in England.

Lord Chatham resigns the privy seal.

* Two pamphlets published this year, "The present State of the Nation," by Mr. Grenville; and "Observations on that present State," by Mr. Burke; in their principles and views, manifest the very different and opposite opinions of the Grenville and Rockingham parties.

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North, while only chancellor of the exchequer, rarely exceeded his official business, or took an active share in the general concerns of administration. Lords Camden and Shelburne, both coinciding in the views and opinions of lord Chatham, had little connexion with their colleagues in office. The other secretaries of state were not distinguished for political talents; so that, on the whole, the present ministry was far from possessing that combined ability and concert, that would have qualified them to manage with effect the manifold and complicated objects which demanded the attention of the British government. Such was the state of foreign, colonial, and domestic affairs, when the season arrived for the meeting of parliament.

CHAP. VIII.

Meeting of parliament—petition of Mr. Wilkes—charges against him, at the instance of ministers—expelled the house—rechosen—declared ineligible during the present parliament—chosen a third time—election again declared void—a competitor set up—Mr. Wilkes returned by a great majority—Mr. Lutterel declared by parliament duly elected.—Violent debates, and national ferment.—Revival against the Americans of trials within the realm for treasons committed beyond seas.—Debt on the civil list.—Affairs of the East India company—Hyder Ally—war in the Carnatic.—Europe—gallant resistance of Corsica against the French—at last overpowered.—America—discontent increases from the new mode of trial.—Extreme dissatisfaction in England—the chief topic the Middlesex election.—Johnson's False Alarm.—Junius—object and character of that extraordinary work.—Petitions—remonstrance of the city of London.—Meeting of parliament—lords Chatham and Camden oppose ministry—resignation of the duke of Grafton.

THE session commenced on the 8th of November; his majesty recommended from the throne^f the consideration of our commercial interests, and, regretted the interruption on the continent of the general tranquillity; but stated the assurances which he had received, that Britain would not be affected by the foreign disturbances. He mentioned the commotions in America, particularly submitted the affairs of that part of his dominions to the wisdom of parliament, and inculcated the necessity of internal harmony and union. To the proposed addresses, great opposition was made; ministers were charged with having excited the disorders in America, and with gross inattention to external affairs. The Bourbon compact

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Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

^f See State Papers, 1768.

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became every day closer, and, extending its influence to Austria, brought the balance or power into imminent danger. The violation of the general tranquillity in the invasion of Corsica, France would never have attempted, but from her knowing the feebleness and distractions of the British cabinet. Our commercial interests, it was added, were entirely neglected. These were the outlines of the censures against ministers, brought forward on the first day of the session, as a text for future comment and expatiation.

THE first particular subject which occupied their deliberations was corn: the crop that year had been good, and measures were projected to prevent the recurrence of scarcity. A bill was prepared, not only for increasing the prohibition on the exportation of corn, but also for preventing the extraction of low wines and spirits from wheat and flour. This act was useful so far as it extended, but too trifling in its object and operation to afford any material security against the return of dearth. An evil so frequently prevailing in such a fertile country as England, manifested the expediency of restoring agriculture to its due weight in political economy, and devoting the attention of the legislature to the cultivation of land, as well as the improvement of manufactures and commerce. Other concerns, however, more urgent though less important, occupied parliament.

DURING this session, Wilkes engrossed a great portion of parliamentary attention. This celebrated agitator had uniformly proposed^g by political bustle to acquire notoriety and wealth. He succeeded in becoming conspicuous, but had not hitherto attained opulence: to ministers (as we have seen) he had in vain applied for pecuniary assistance; but though they refused him the required supply, they left and promoted one means of acquisition, in his extensive popularity. In the generous hearts of Englishmen, distress is a never failing passport to pity and protection. If the suffering arise from real or apparent oppression, the spirit of freedom enhances the desire of benignant vindication; and especially, if the alleged

^g This he himself declared to Mr. Gibbon, before the publication of the North Briton. Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, vol. i. p. 100, note.

persecution issue from the executive government. But as the affections of the multitude are more ardent than their judgment is discriminating, their regards are more frequently bestowed upon noisy demagogues, than wise and beneficent patriots. Whoever proposes popularity as his chief object, well knows that he must keep alive the public attention. Wilkes and his supporters were thoroughly skilled in the machinery of political notoriety, and spent a great part of the recess in holding meetings, clubs, and parties; framing resolutions, remonstrances, and pamphlets. Lest the curiosity of the people should be diminished, or the zeal of his supporters cooled, Wilkes deemed it expedient to present a petition to the house of commons. This paper recapitulated all his alleged grievances, from his first apprehension in April 1763, to his commitment in 1768: the only new matter that it contained was an assertion, that lord Mansfield had illegally and tyrannically altered the records; and that Philip Carteret Webb esq. secretary to the treasury, had bribed the petitioner's servants with the public money, to steal the Essay on Woman, to be made a ground of prosecution. The former statements of the petition, being a narrative of proceedings already determined by the law of the country, the house passed over; on the two last allegations a discussion commenced on the 21st of January 1769, which lasted till the 3d of February. On the charge against lord Mansfield it was resolved, that the orders made by the lord chief justice of the king's bench, for the amendment of the informations established in the said court against Mr. Wilkes, were according to law and equity, and the practice of the court; and also, that the complaint was frivolous, groundless, and prejudicial to the administration of public justice: on the second head it was resolved, that the charge against Mr. Webb was not proved. The preface to lord Weymouth's letter, of which Mr. Wilkes acknowledged himself author and publisher, next came under consideration; it was voted to be a false, scandalous, and seditious libel, tending to the subversion of all order and legal government; and a proposition was immediately made, that Mr. Wilkes should be expelled the house. In supporting this motion,

Petition of
Mr.
Wilkes.

Proceed-
ings res-
pecting
Wilkes:

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ministers and their adherents spoke and acted as parties eagerly interested in carrying a proposition, not as judges investigating the conduct of one of their peers, that they might deliver a fair and impartial sentence. The charge was accumulative and indefinite; it contained a recitation of his former offences and expulsion, and also of conduct which was then undergoing the animadversion of the courts of law, fully competent to condemnation or acquittal.^h Their speechesⁱ chiefly expatiated on these subjects, and contained the irrelevant exaggerations of passion, much more than the statements and proofs of justice. The opposers of this sentence contended, that the libel on lord Weymouth, a peer of the realm, was the only specific ground of the motion; that his privileges as a lord, were not cognizable by the commons; and that any offence against him as a British subject, belonged to the laws of the land. For the other libels, he had been already expelled, and the house had punished him for an attack upon the legislature. Should he be twice chastised for the same offence? "By the present proposition (they said) we are to blend the executive and judicial powers of the state with the legislative, and to extend our jurisdiction, that we may take upon ourselves the odium of trying and punishing in a summary manner an offence which does not affect us, but is subject to the investigation of the laws. In the exercise of this assumed power, we are to form an accumulative and complicated charge, which no other courts, nor even we, have ever admitted in other instances. We are to mingle new crimes with old, and to try a man twice for the same misdemeanour. We are to transfer the censures of a former parliament into the hands of the present, which is to make them the foundation of a new punishment. We are to assume a power of determining the rights of the people, and of their representatives, by no other rule but our own discretion or caprice."^k Strong as these arguments may appear to the impartial reader, they were overborne by a ministerial majority, and Mr. Wilkes was

^h See Journal of the House of Commons, Feb. 3d, 1669.

ⁱ See Parliamentary Debates on the expulsion of Wilkes; Feb. 3d. 1763.

^k See Parliamentary Debates, February 3d, 1769.

expelled the house of commons. The conduct of ministry manifested that alteration of laxity and violence, which never can proceed from united wisdom and vigour. If severe punishment were expedient, why was it not employed when he returned from exile, before the reversal of his outlawry?¹ Permitted then to be out of confinement, he had revived his popularity, and paved the way for its progress to a height which nothing tended more effectually to increase than further prosecution.

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he is expelled the house:

WELL knowing the temper of his constituents, and of the nation in general, Wilkes considered his expulsion as the sure road to greater popularity and distinction, and immediately offered himself candidate for the vacated county. The favour of his supporters rose to an enthusiasm that overspread London, the county, and their environs; and the sympathetic spirit quickly diffused itself throughout England: under the influence of such sentiments, his reelection was unanimous; and the next day he was declared by the house incapable of being reelected during the present parliament. On the 16th of March, Mr. Wilkes was chosen a third time; and the following day his election was again declared void. The Middlesex freeholders avowing their determination to choose him again, ministers set up another candidate, colonel Luttrell. The fourth election took place on the 13th of April: for Mr. Wilkes, there were eleven hundred and forty-three lawful voters; for his opponent, two hundred and ninety-six: Mr. Wilkes was accordingly returned. The next day, his name was erased from the writ by order of the house; and the day after, Henry Lawes Luttrell esq. was, after a very violent debate, declared, by a majority of 221 to 139, duly elected.^m The passionate resentment of rulers against an individual, so clearly manifesting their want of magnanimity and true wisdom, produced a totally different effect from that which they expected or desired: their aversion procured to its object the warmest popularity. Ten days after the last vote of the house of

Feb. 16th,
is reelected.

but declared ineligible.

Luttrell returned.

¹ See Junius's Letter XI. to the duke of Grafton.

^m This was the question on which a youth, destined to be one of the greatest orators and ablest men ever admired in any senate, first spoke in parliament: Charles James Fox had procured a seat before the legal age; and a lawgiver at twenty, astonished his hearers by the force of his abilities.

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National
ferment.Revival,
against the
colonies, of
trials with-
in the
realm, for
treason be-
yond sea.

commons, he was chosen alderman of the city of London. Subscriptions were opened, to raise money both for the liquidation of his debts and his future subsistence. He was represented as a meritorious patriot, suffering oppression and tyranny for his virtues.

DURING this session, America occupied a great share of parliamentary attention; both ministry and opposition were desirous of an inquiry, but the motives of the parties were different. Ministers proposed to justify their own conduct and that of their officers, and to convince the public that all the disturbances which had happened, were owing to the refractory and rebellious spirit of the colonists; while, on the other hand, their opponents endeavoured to demonstrate, that the commotions were caused by the weakness and arbitrary proceedings of the British government. Having these different motives to inquiry, ministers and opposition desired different modes; the former proposed to confine their investigations to the late acts of the Americans; the latter, to consider not only the conduct of the colonists, but the measures of Britain for several years; to trace disorders to their sources; as only by the knowledge of these, could the evil be effectually removed. This broad plan of discussion by no means suited the designs of ministry; and it was carried by a great majority, that the investigation should be conducted on narrowed grounds. The house resolved itself into a committee, and motions were made for various papers, which would have illustrated the conduct of government and its servants; but they were uniformly overruled. Papers in great variety were indeed laid before the house; but they related to the conduct of the colonists merely, without including the measures of government. With such incomplete materials, the majority of the legislature reposed so great a confidence in ministers, as to be perfectly satisfied; and on them undertook to deliberate.

On the 8th of February, an address to his majesty passed the house of lords, and was adopted by the commons, declaring the late proceedings of the house of representatives of Massachusetts bay to be a denial of the authority of the supreme legislature to make laws for the colonies. It therefore asserted the acts to be illegal,

unconstitutional, and derogatory to the rights of the crown and parliament of Great Britain; and reprobated the circular letters of the same assembly, as tending to inflame the other colonies, and to create unlawful combinations. It declared the town of Boston to be in a state of disorder and disobedience to law; justified the measure of sending a military force, as necessary in such an exigency; stated the opinion of the houses to be, that nothing could so effectually preserve British authority in the tumultuous provinces, as the condign punishment of the rioters; and recommended to his majesty to revive the execution of Henry VIII.'s statute, for trying within the realm of England treasons committed beyond seas. The proposed revival of this law was very strongly controverted; it was the constitutional privilege of every British subject, declared by the great charter, confirmed by various subsequent laws, and by uniformly established usage, to be tried by his peers, and in the county in which the transgression was alleged to have been committed, that, if innocent, he might easily bring forward such testimony as would insure his acquittal. The projected plan would be most iniquitous in its operation; by carrying the accused to an immense distance from his friends and business, it rendered it impossible, except for a man of great wealth, to endure the expense of bringing over exculpatory evidence, or taking other effectual steps to clear himself from the charge. The prosecution, in effect, would be condemnation; even if the defendant were acquitted, the purposes of justice would be entirely defeated. Ministers alleged, that from the atrocity to which licentiousness had risen in Massachusetts, the revival of this statute was absolutely necessary: that the legislature and the public ought to have so much confidence in government, as to be convinced that they would not harass innocent persons; that the expense, and other inconveniences, to the guilty, were only parts of their punishment, and there was no reason to question the impartiality of British juries. It was indeed improbable, that there could be any necessity for executing the act, as the display of mingled vigour and lenity would bring back the colonists to a sense of their duty. An historian wholly

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the East
India com-
pany.

uninfluenced by the party notions of the times, cannot but lament the infatuation of ministers, who, when the Americans were so greatly discontented by the infringement of one constitutional right of British subjects in taxation without their consent, attacked another constitutional right equally valuable, the trial by peers. The general character of the policy of this administration towards America, was feeble anger, which provoked without intimidating its objects.

PARLIAMENT now turned its attention to the affairs of the East India company. The agreement made with that body, as well as the act for restraining the dividends; being now on the eve of expiration, the company made overtures for a new contract; and after a long negotiation, a bargain was settled on the following terms: the company was to continue to pay to the public for five years, the annual sum of four hundred thousand pounds; they were at liberty to increase their dividend to twelve and a half per cent.; but the addition was not to exceed one per cent. in any one year. Should the company in that period be obliged to reduce their dividends, a proportionate sum was to be deducted from their payment to government; and should they fall to six per cent. the payment was to be discontinued. The company was bound to export British goods, at an average, of equal value to those annually sent to India during the last five years; and should any surplus of the company's cash remain in England after the payment of specified debts; it was to be lent to government at two per cent. These stipulations were deemed advantageous to government; and reckoned a favourable specimen of the official talents of lord North, who had been extremely instrumental in fixing the conditions. A message was sent this session by the king to the house of commons, informing them, that a debt of 513,000*l.* had been incurred by the civil list, and asking their assistance for its discharge: the opponents of ministers proposed an inquiry into the expenditure, which was negatived, and the required sum granted; and on 9th of May the session was concluded.

Debt on
the civil
list.Affairs in
India.

WHILE events so interesting to England were going on in Europe and America, a war broke out against the

company in India, excited and headed by an adventurer, who, with his son, proved more formidable enemies, than any native princes that Britain ever encountered in the east.

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HYDER ALLY, from being a common soldier, raised himself to be master of the Mysore country, in the mountains between the eastern and western coasts of the hither peninsula, and on the Malabar side acquired extensive dominions adjoining the ocean. Endowed with vigorous natural talents, he possessed great military experience, which was chiefly attained by a long service among the Europeans. He applied himself to form and discipline his own army on the model of their system, and was assisted by a number of French adventurers in training his soldiers, and teaching them the use of artillery. This bold and ambitious warrior formed a project of rendering himself master of Indostan; but, aware that in the English he would meet the most formidable opponents, he proposed, to drive them from India. With this view, applying to the Nizam, viceroy of the Decan, he, partly by threats and partly by promises, induced him to join in war against the English. Informed of the new confederacy, the council of Madras immediately despatched colonel Smith with a body of troops against the allied army. The British commander, coming up with the enemy, drew them to battle on the 26th of September 1767, near Trincomallee. Hyder Ally demonstrated himself both a valiant soldier and an able general; but the Indians, notwithstanding their numbers, being soon broken by the impetuosity and force of the British troops, were completely defeated. Freed from the apprehension of Hyder Ally's power, the Nizam made peace with the company, and purchased their forgiveness, by ceding to them the collection of a very extensive revenue in the Balagat Carnatic. The chieftain of Mysore, finding himself unable to cope with the British on the plains, retired to the Ghauts, where, through his cavalry, he disturbed his enemies by predatory incursions. In January 1768, a strong armament, fitted out at Bombay, attacked and took Mangalore, Hyder Ally's chief harbour. By an unaccountable oversight, they left very few troops to garrison

Hyder
Ally.

War in the
Carnatic.

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the forts ; and these were soon afterwards made prisoners by Hyder. The war against this adventurer, when carried beyond the purposes of defence, was not attended with ultimate advantage ; upon the system adopted by the company, field deputies were appointed to superintend and control the commander in chief, and these interfering in his plans of operations, prevented them from being effectual. General Smith had penetrated into the Mysore country, and might have advanced to Seringapatam, but he was counteracted by the deputies, whose gains depended on the continuance of war, and not on the achievement of conquest. Trusting to the celerity of his own troops, Hyder, in the absence of the English general, hastened to the Carnatic, plundered the company's ally the nabob of Arcot, and compelled Smith to return to the defence of the Coromandel coast. Taught by experience, he avoided a general engagement with the English, but straitened their quarters, cut off their supplies, and exhausted them in unavailing pursuits and marches. Meanwhile, having strengthened his cause by alliances with Mahratta chieftains, and increased his army, he had the boldness to advance with a large body of horse almost to the gates of Madras. Colonel Wood, with a detachment, attacked a fort called Mulwaggle on Hyder's frontiers, but was repulsed. Encouraged by this advantage, Hyder determined to hazard a battle : a contest took place on the 4th of October, more obstinate than any that had been fought between the English and Indians, and each party was repeatedly obliged to retreat ; but at last, after having caused great loss to the victors, the Mysorean abandoned the field. Hyder did not again venture a battle, but continued the harassing species of war which had so much annoyed the English. He again marched towards Madras ; but, knowing that if he attacked it an engagement would be unavoidable, he did not make the attempt. Tired of a war which required very great expenditure without any prospect of adequate recompense, the English made overtures for peace, which their antagonist very willingly accepted ; and a treaty was concluded on the 3d of April 1768, on the general principle of restitution of conquests. Hyder was the ablest Indian foe with whom Britain had

ever been engaged; and this was the first war between the company and a native power in which they acquired an advantage, and incurred all the loss of their expenses.

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Europe.

In Europe, the eyes of the different nations were during this and part of the preceding year, turned chiefly to the very unequal contest that was carrying on between France and the small island of Corsica. As soon as the treaty between his christian majesty and Genoa was published, and the invasion of the island appeared certain, a general meeting of the nation was held at Corta; and, after a very animated and elegant speech by Pascal Paoli, it was determined to defend their liberties to the last extremity. On the 24th of June 1768, the French troops landed, and found the islanders determined to resist. The brave Corsicans disputed every inch of ground against a numerous and well disciplined army, and frequently defeated them in severe skirmishes. The French commander in chief issued a proclamation, full of promises if the Corsicans submitted, and of threats if they continued to oppose the king. Paoli having laid these proposals before the assembly, they tore the papers, trampled them with the greatest marks of rage and indignation, and unanimously concurred in calling out for war. The French, being now reinforced by fresh troops from home, made considerable progress on the banks of the river Golo; but Paoli, who had been watching a body of the enemy in another quarter, hastily advanced to this district, and on the 11th of September attacked and defeated them with great slaughter. In the course of the summer, the Corsicans continued to gain signal advantages; and the result was so important, that during the remainder of the campaign, the French, though recruited from the continent, were obliged to act on the defensive. The Corsicans had been inspirited to these gallant efforts by the hope of foreign assistance, without which, they well knew, their exertions against such a power as France must be ultimately hopeless. To England principally they had looked for aid, expecting that country to be the best inclined to vindicate liberty and oppose the ambition of France, and the most able to send them assistance in their insular situation. But the court of Versailles well knew, that they had not to

Gallant resistance of
Corsica.

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dread a William Pitt in the English cabinet; that the British ministry were weak, distracted, unequal to internal and colonial politics, and without either the disposition or the ability to take an active and effectual part in foreign affairs. During the winter, the French leaders pressed these considerations on the Corsican chiefs; not a few of whom began to consider their resistance as desperate. These sentiments, however, did not immediately appear in their conduct. In January and February 1769, they made several attempts on the French quarters but were frequently repulsed. As the spring advanced, the French taking the field, made considerable progress, though the brave islanders maintained their cause with the warmest zeal and unimpaired resolution. In the beginning of April, the count de Vaux landed with so many troops as made the French army amount to 30,000 men, and several engagements took place: in the first, the Corsicans were superior: in the second, neither party gained any decisive advantage: in the third, however, the islanders were totally defeated with dreadful slaughter; and, to heighten the disaster, one of their chiefs betrayed his distressed country, and with eight hundred men joined the enemy. In May, the greater part of the island was overrun, and their chief towns were compelled to yield to the French. Their patriotic and gallant leader Paoli, however, with about five hundred men, still continued to resist. These heroes were at last surrounded by four thousand of the enemy, when he energetically asked them, if they would ingloriously surrender, or die free men with sword in hand. They unanimously embraced the latter alternative, attacked the French, and with great slaughter on both sides the survivors of the Corsicans made their way through the enemy. Paoli having for two days, with some of his friends and attendants, eluded the search of the enemy got on board an English ship at Porto Vecchia, and was landed at Leghorn, where he was received both by the inhabitants and others, more as a triumphant conqueror, than as an exile from a conquered country. From Leghorn he sailed to England, where he also met with the most flattering reception, and from that time resided. Corsica having become a part of the French dominions, its

government was modelled according to the will of the French king, rendered totally dependent upon him, and an appendage to the most contiguous French district of Provence.

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IN America, the proposed change in trials for treason not only enraged the before disaffected, but even alarmed the loyal and faithful partisans of the king and mother country. To transport an accused person, before the establishment of guilt, over an immense ocean of three thousand miles; to tear from his family, friends, and country, a man, in the eye of the law innocent; to carry him away for many months from his lawful business, by which he maintained his children, and upheld his rank in society, was in effect equal to banishment, and an infliction of the most cruel penalties, before it was proved that any punishment was just. Such a measure, every person of common sagacity must see, was totally inconsistent with the principles of natural jurisprudence, and with both the letter and spirit of British criminal law. Even those who had uniformly supported the legislative supremacy of Britain, began to question an authority designed to be exercised in such oppression. In Massachusetts for a short time the projected scheme produced some effect in repressing the disorders: this, however, arose merely from awe of the soldiers; but, as they were not employed in executing any vigorous measures for restraining disorders, the fears of the colonists soon vanished. The assembly, maintaining the proposition to be unjust, unconstitutional, and tyrannical, formed resolutions to resist its operation: they voted charges against their governor for misconduct; which, with a petition for his removal, they transmitted to England. The other colonial assemblies reprobated the revived statute with no less force of reason than the new Englanders; and some of them with still greater severity of expression, accompanied by more violent resolutions. Bitter altercations took place between the assemblies and the governors, some of whom imitated Mr. Bernard in dissolving these meetings. Such acts, far from benefiting the parent country, diffused dissatisfaction more widely, by spreading through the people the sentiments which had prevailed in the assemblies. The enmity of the Ameri-

America.
Discon-
tents from
the new
mode of
trial.

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cans to the scheme of the present year, contributed very powerfully to the promotion and extension of the associations against British commodities. Committees were appointed in all the principal towns, to inspect cargoes from Britain, and to report to the constituents if any persons had purchased prohibited articles. Whoever were found to transgress the resolutions of the associators, were publicly censured in their meetings, which moreover inserted their names in the newspapers, to render them odious to the people. By these combinations, resolutely determined to persevere in their purpose, British commerce suffered a very great diminution. It was found, on an investigation, that the exports from this country to America in 1769, fell short by seven hundred and forty-four thousand pounds of those of the year 1768. It appeared also, that the revenue from America, which had been in 1767 one hundred and ten thousand pounds, in 1768 had lessened to seventy thousand, and in 1769 was so low as thirty thousand. The association had confined the prohibition of the specified articles to those of British growth or manufacture; the natural consequence of which was, that they began to be smuggled from foreign countries, especially from France; and thus the two acts of this administration, the law of 1767 for raising a revenue from America, and the proposal in 1769 of reviving an oppressive statute of a tyrannical prince, long obsolete for its absurdity and injustice, prevented the use of British manufactures, destroyed an important branch of commerce, impaired revenue, encouraged the produce and trade of continental Europe, and enriched our commercial and political rivals: so narrow were the views of the ministers of that time, and so extensive were the consequences of their weakness, rashness, and impolicy.

DURING the summer, discontents arose in England to a greater height than in any preceding period of the reign. Although the conduct of administration respecting America had its share in exciting dissatisfaction, yet the chief cause was the proceedings against Mr. Wilkes, especially with regard to the Middlesex election. The nomination of Mr. Lutterel involved in it a totally different question from the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes. The expulsion,

whether well or ill founded, was a question of individual conduct, of which the justice or injustice terminated in Mr. Wilkes himself, without affecting any other person; but the nomination of a man supported by a minority involved a constitutional right, and the decision might eventually affect many others. A subject which so greatly agitated and interested the public mind, naturally became a theme of literary discussion, and the ablest men were engaged on both sides. The question at issue was, whether expulsion constituted disqualification during the current parliament? The supporters of the affirmative contended, that the power of disqualifying persons from being members of its body was inherent in the house of commons, and that its exertion could be demonstrated from precedents. The force of Dr. Johnson was employed on this side of the question, in the essay which was entitled, "False Alarm:" and his chief argument was, that the power of disqualifying expelled members, was necessary to the house of commons; as expulsion with reeligibility would be a nominal, not a real punishment. He also quoted the case of sir Robert Walpole, and dwelt on the individual character of Mr. Wilkes. Political expediency, however, could not prove existing law; and individual character was irrelative to a question of privilege between constituents and the representative body. The writer who entered most fully and minutely into this question, upon the real grounds of law and precedent, was the celebrated Junius. He defied his adversaries to produce any statute applicable to the subject. The precedent on which ministers rested, was the case of Walpole; but, as Junius shows, the judgment of the house was quite different.ⁿ Mr. Wilkes was expelled, so was Mr. Walpole; Mr. Wilkes was reelected by a majority of votes, so was Mr. Walpole. The friends of Mr. Taylor, the opposing candidate, petitioned parliament; that he, though supported by a minority, should be returned; the house determined that Mr. Taylor was not duly elected. Mr. Luttrell, supported by a minority, was declared by the house to be duly returned. Mr.

Johnson's
False
Alarm.

Letters of
Junius.

ⁿ See Letter xvi. dated July 19th, 1769.

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Wilkes was declared incapable of being elected, because he had been expelled; Mr. Walpole was declared incapable of sitting in parliament, not because he had been expelled, but because he was deemed guilty of a breach of trust and notorious corruption in his official character of secretary at war.

THE Middlesex election was one occasion which called forth the epistolary eloquence of this renowned writer; but the objects of its exertion and the range of its expatiation were far more extensive. During the supremacy of the whigs, the influence of public opinion had very rapidly increased throughout the English nation. The same spirit of inquiry that had scrutinized the actions of the Stuart princes, operated with redoubled force after the revolution had ascertained the extent and bounds of privilege and prerogative; and the consequent laws had sanctioned the use of freedom's most powerful engine, the press, tried and proved in the contentions of the whigs and tories in the reigns of William and Anne; of ministerial and anti-ministerial parties, while Walpole sat at the helm of affairs: the efficacy of this energetic instrument was more fully essayed since the accession of the present sovereign to the throne; and most successfully employed in counteracting the liberal and comprehensive policy which, without respect of parties, sought official fitness in the ministers of the crown. Misapprehending, or perverting ingenuity, charged the failure of erroneous or premature means to the impolicy of the general end; and endeavoured to demonstrate, that every censurable measure of individual ministers arose from the new system, and that the only remedy for the evils under which the country and its dependencies labour, was the renewal of the whig monopoly.^o These were the propositions which the parliamentary orators of the aristocratical confederacy wished to inculcate themselves, and also to disseminate through literary coadjutors. To this phalanx of opposition and discontent, several senators, and many writers, who were not partisans, adhered; in the course of the contests, the high and growing authority of the

^o See the scope of opposition writings, but especially Burke on the discontents, and Junius's Letters.

press was daily more manifest, and in the estimation of the multitude rivalled parliament itself, and the whig^p combination entertained sanguine hopes, that through intrinsic force, aided by literary eloquence that fanned the popular flame, they should at length succeed in restoring the former system, and recovering the direction of the royal councils. To regain for the whigs and their supporters the sole possession of the political fortress, fought their champion Junius. Personal motives evidently inflamed this writer against individual officers of the crown, whom party considerations induced him to assail, as members of a body which was to be driven from the councils of the king, to make way for the restoration of the whigs. He began his warfare in January 1769, by a general view of the state of the country; described Britain, as internally distracted, and as little regarded by foreign powers: and assuming the truth of his account, imputed the alleged evils to the new system and the existing ministers. He thence descended to specific measures, and the respective characters of the chief members of the administration; with a twofold purpose, of deriving the counsels from the new plan of royal policy, and its alleged framer and conductor lord Bute; and demonstrating that the chief officers of the crown were, from private profligacy, public corruption, or political prepossessions, the fittest for carrying it into execution.^q The Middlesex election, at an early period of his work, afforded him an opportunity of inveighing against ministers, and attacking parliament as meanly condescending to be the tool of government in violating the rights of electors, and depriving Englishmen of their constitutional and most valuable franchise. Keeping directly to his purpose, he deduced the Middlesex election from the new system, and the ministers who had been chosen to render it effectual. To the same cause he ascribed the various acts, legislative, executive, and judicial, which he reprobated in the course of his writings. With skilful unity of design, the details and result of his eloquence,

^p See Letters to the duke of Grafton, &c. and to the dukes of Grafton and Bedford, and lord Mansfield.

^q He accuses lords Mansfield and Bute with jacobinism. See Letters, *passim*.

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were adapted to his purposes of impressing the public with an opinion, that the whole policy of the present reign had been unconstitutional in principles, at once feeble and oppressive in operation, and pernicious in effect. Advanced not in the impassioned hour of contentious and temporary debate, but in an uniform series of deliberate inculcation, such assertions evidently conveyed an indirect censure of the sovereign; but circuitous attack was not sufficient for the purpose of Junius. A direct address to the king himself, he thought, would more effectually accomplish the end for which he employed his pen. Composed with exquisite skill and great ability; dexterously adapted to the popular prejudices, and the views of the whigs, his letters had converged all the rays of discontent into one focus; now was the time for exciting a flame, which should consume every object that was hostile to the confederacy of the whigs. He wrote a letter, that contained a direct and virulent attack on the conduct and government of the king; in which the errors imputed to the monarch's administration were his dereliction of the policy^r of his two predecessors; his choice of servants without regard to the whig connexion, his employment of Scotchmen, and the series of successive measures which these changes had produced. The consequences (said Junius to his sovereign) must be dissatisfaction, rebellion, and revolution: unless the king should cease to govern according to his own judgment and choice, and should yield his understanding and will to the implicit direction of a party. Such was the object and nature of the Letters of Junius, which continued to be published for near four years; and to insure almost unprecedented circulation through the union of the prevalent violence of popular licentiousness, with vigorous and masterly composition. For clearness, precision, and force of style, select phraseology, dexterous arrangement, impressiveness of manner, giving the materials the most pointed effect, these productions have rarely been exceeded, and not often equalled, by political publications; but he who shall look into Junius for a close chain of antecedents and consequents, facts, and legitimate

(Object and character of this extraordinary man.

^r Junius's Letter to the king, December 19th, 1769.

inferences; will be disappointed, by seeking for what the author never intended to bestow, and what would not have answered his purpose. Junius COULD reason clearly and strongly; but he did not constantly argue conclusively, because his object was, not to enlighten the understanding, but to inflame the passions. He gratified the people by repeating to them, in strong and nervous language, their own notions and feelings: he pleased them not by the justness of performance, but by dexterously chiming their favourite tunes. His charges against the dukes of Grafton and Bedford represent those noblemen as the most profligate and abandoned men that ever had disgraced the British senate or cabinet; but what impartial estimator of political characters would form his judgment from accusations that were substantiated by no proof, and totally inconsistent with probability? The illustrious Mansfield he described as a most corrupt and unjust judge, as a mean time-serving and unprincipled courtier, and as a jacobite, inimical to the king and government which he professed to support. What weight would an impartial investigator of merit allow to such calumnious allegations, not only unsupported by any proof, but disproved by the whole tenor and course of the life and conduct of their object. Aware, that in the misapprehension of party rage, the slander of dignity and merit was one road to popularity, Junius insulted a much more exalted character, and completed his calumny by charges which were equally false and seditious. History, after taking a retrospective view of Grecian and Roman demagogues, will scarcely be able to present such an instance of invective, ingenious and inflammatory; scurrility, nervous and elegant; plausible sophistry, impressive declamation, poignant and sarcastic malice, as in the English orator of the IRON MASK. These anonymous effusions were not prized only by such critics as composed Mr. Wilkes's election mobs, but by readers of real abilities and learning, who, hostile to government, and approving the spirit which they breathed, did not rigorously scrutinize the arguments; men of taste, charmed with the beauties of the composition, overlooked the reasoning and tendency; and never was a political work more universally perused than the Letters of Junius.

CHAP.
VIII.

1769.

Petitions.

Remon-
strance of
the city of
London.

MINISTERS, aware of the prevailing discontents, endeavoured to procure addresses which might counteract the popular spirit, but were in England by no means successful. Essex, Kent, Surry, and Salop, were the only counties; the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the cities of Bristol and Coventry, and the town of Liverpool, the only corporations of note that expressed the sentiments desired by government. From Scotland, however, the addresses were more numerous and agreeable to ministry.^s

Petitions, on the contrary, were presented from many counties, cities, and corporations, and these were of two very different classes: one set, though explicit, was temperate; and, though forcible, decorous: of this species, the best written and most distinguished were from Buckinghamshire and Yorkshire, supposed to have been respectively framed by Mr. Burke and sir George Saville. These confined themselves to the rights of election, which they asserted to be violated; and, either indirectly or expressly, prayed for a dissolution of parliament. The other class, though nominally petitions, were false and indecent remonstrances; of these, the most noted and prominent were from Middlesex and the city of London.^t They professed to review the whole series of acts during his present majesty's reign. According to their account, the king had been uniformly directed by profligate counsellors, who had infused into the royal mind sentiments and counsels of the most dangerous tendency to the liberties and happiness of his subjects; from those pernicious counsels, according to their assertion and enumeration, had proceeded the corruption of all the orders, and violation of the most sacred rights of Englishmen; and the reign of the king was a tissue of unjust, tyrannical, and cruel acts, flowing from the legislative, executive, and judicative estates: after this statement, they proceeded to pray, that he would banish from his royal favour, trust, and confidence, his evil and pernicious counsellors. Though the tenor and language of the Middlesex and London petitions were essentially the same, the latter was

^s See State Papers, 1769.
the Middlesex electors, May 24th, 1769, and the London petition of June 30th, 1769.

^t See in the State Papers, the petition of

rendered more notorious, by the perseverance of unfounded expostulation with which its promoters obtruded their abusive charges upon their sovereign. False as many of the allegations were, yet, coming from the most opulent body in the kingdom, they had very great influence in spreading the discontents, and the dissatisfaction had risen to an extraordinary height before the meeting of the legislature.

CHAP.
VIII.

1770.

PARLIAMENT was assembled on the 9th of January 1770; and, contrary to popular expectation, his majesty's speech did not mention the public discontents. One subject of which the king spoke, though really of very great importance, was much ridiculed by the speakers and writers of opposition. An infectious distemper having broken out among the cattle, threatened one of the chief articles of provision. The king, by the advice of his privy council, had taken every step which he thought likely to stop the contagion, and consulted his parliament on farther measures to be adopted concerning a matter of the highest national importance. He expressed his regret, that his endeavours to tranquillize America had not been attended with the desired success; and that combinations had been formed to destroy the commercial connexion between our colonial provinces and this country. He had, however, received the strongest assurances, that the present disturbances in Europe would not interrupt the quiet of Great Britain. The debate upon the address contained a very wide range of animadversion, and great acrimony of censure, into which the opposition in both houses introduced the Middlesex election, the prevailing discontents in England, and the commotions in America, and urged the dissolution of parliament and a total change of counsels. Ministers, admitting that discontents existed, imputed them to the spirit of faction, and the speeches, writings, and petitions, which had been thence produced; they, however, were by no means unanimous. Lords Camden and Shelburne withdrew from counsels so different from those which they and their admired friend lord Chatham would have supported or approved. Soon after,

1770.
Meeting of
parliament.

^u See Junius's Letter to the duke of Grafton, February 14th, 1770.

CHAP.
VIII.

1770.
Resigna-
tion of the
duke of
Grafton.

to the great astonishment of the nation, the duke of Grafton, on the 28th of January, resigned his office of first lord of the treasury. Lord Cambden and Mr. Dunning, his chief supporters in their respective houses, had shown themselves inimical to the measures which had been recently pursued: besides, the duke of Grafton professed himself the political pupil of the illustrious Chatham; and though, during the illness and inaction of that statesman, he had swerved from his principles, opinions, and maxims, he still avowed the highest veneration for his character and sentiments. Perfectly recovered, lord Chatham was now returned to parliament, and with his wonted vigour attacked the system and measures of administration. The opposition of all his ablest friends, Grafton could not endure. In addition to these causes, we may find another probable reason for the dereliction of his post. Junius, indefatigable in raking together calumnious anecdotes, and dexterous in bestowing on them the appearance of truth, had made the private as well as the public conduct of this nobleman the chief butt of his satire, and for his actions assigned the most contemptible and unworthy motives. He must be either grossly stupid or stoically magnanimous, either less or greater than ordinary men, who, though conscious of innocence, can bear with indifference powerful calumny that produces general belief. The duke of Grafton, regarding his character, was so much moved by the Letters of Junius, that they certainly cooperated with other causes in impelling him to resign.

CHAP. IX.

Commencement of lord North's administration.—The remonstrance of the city of London—and reply of his majesty—are discussed in parliament.—Bill to prevent officers of the revenue from voting at elections—negatived.—Mr. Grenville's law for regulating contested elections.—Lord North's bill for repealing all duties on America, except on tea.—Tumult at Boston—captain Preston and the soldiers interfere—tried and acquitted. The minister wishing conciliation, overlooks the riot.—Session rises.—War between Russia and Turkey.—Catharine is favoured by England—sends a fleet to the Mediterranean—her armies overrun Moldavia and Wallachia—alarm Prussia and Austria.—France—disputes between the king and parliaments—Dispute between Britain and Spain about Falkland's island.—Spain, the aggressor, refuses to make adequate satisfaction—trusts to the co-operation of France—disappointed—offers concessions that satisfy the British court. America becomes more tranquil.—Discontents still continue in England. London addresses the king—dignified answer of his majesty—noted reply of Beckford, the lord mayor—Meeting of parliament.—Lord Mansfield's doctrines on the law of libel—are controverted by lord Camden—Camden challenges the chief justice to a legal disquisition on the subject—lord Mansfield declines the contest.—Prosecution of printers.—Misunderstanding between the two houses.—Singular confederacy for bribery in the borough of Shoreham.—Opposition censure the terms of satisfaction admitted from Spain.—Supplies.—Session rises.

LORD NORTH, chancellor of the exchequer, succeeded the duke of Grafton in his office of first lord of the treasury; and from this time commenced an administration which forms a momentous era in the history of Great Britain.

CHAP.
IX.

1770.

CHAP.
IX.

1770.
Com-
mence-
ment of
lord
North's
adminis-
tration.

THE Middlesex election came before both houses in a variety of forms, and produced brilliant and forcible eloquence, but necessarily a repetition of arguments which had been already employed. In discussing this subject, lord Chatham reviewed the measures of government, which he declared, in its principles and details, to be weak, unconstitutional, and ruinous; and unfolded his own reasons for opposing a ministry which owed its existence to himself. Finding (he said) the line of conduct which he had chalked out not observed, and his opinion totally overruled, he had withdrawn from public business, and at length entirely resigned.—His several motions, however, were negatived by the influence of ministry.

THE reception of the London petition underwent very severe animadversions. The king not having paid to that production the favourable attention which its authors had the presumption to expect, they chose to deliver another paper to the king, entitled, the *humble address, remonstrance*, and petition of the lord mayor, aldermen, and livery of the city of London. In this *humble application* to their sovereign, these citizens undertook to declare what was the law of the land, and wherein it had been violated; and to prophecy that its violation would produce more ruinous consequences, than the ship money of Charles I. and the dispensing power of James II. The citizens next declared the parliament a *non-entity*, an illegal meeting, whose acts were not binding, and therefore could require no obedience. They drew a parallel between the administrations of George III. and James II.; differing indeed in means, but concurring (they affirmed) in principles and system. The constitution, now endangered by the wickedness of his majesty's ministers, had been established by the virtue of their ancestors, and by the virtue of present patriots it should be preserved. The concluding paragraph of this essay I shall quote, as a specimen of the terms in which this corporation dictated to their monarch, and of the licentiousness of that period of history. "Since, therefore, the misdeeds of your majesty's
"ministers, in violating the freedom of election, and de-
"praving the noble constitution of parliaments, are now
"rious, as well as subversive of the fundamental laws and

Remon-
strance of
city of
London,

"liberties of this realm; and since your majesty, both in
 "honour and justice, is obliged inviolably to preserve them;
 "according to the oath made to God and your subjects at
 "your coronation; we, your majesty's *remonstrants*, assure
 "ourselves, that your majesty will restore the constitutional
 "government and quiet of your people, by dissolving this
 "parliament, and removing those evil ministers for ever
 "from your councils." The answer was a striking exam-
 "ple of temperate, but dignified and forcible reproof; it
 "was couched in the following terms: "I shall always be
 "ready to receive the requests, and to listen to the com-
 "plaints of my subjects; but it gives me great concern to
 "find, that any of them should have been so far misled, as
 "to offer me an address and remonstrance, the contents of
 "which I cannot but consider as disrespectful to me, injuri-
 "ous to my parliament, and irreconcilable to the principles
 "of the constitution. I have made the law of the land the
 "rule of my conduct, esteeming it my chief glory to reign
 "over a free people. With this view, I have always been
 "careful, as well to execute faithfully the trust reposed in
 "me, as to avoid even the appearance of invading any of
 "those powers which the constitution has placed in other
 "hands. It is only by persevering in such a conduct, that
 "I can either discharge my own duty, or secure to my sub-
 "jects the free enjoyment of those rights which my family
 "were called to defend: and while I act upon these princi-
 "ples, I shall have a right to expect, and I am confident I
 "shall continue to receive, the steady and affectionate
 "support of my people."

CHAP.
 IX.

1770.

and reply
 of his ma-
 jesty,

On the 15th of March, the remonstrance was discus-
 sed by the house. The city members, supported by the
 rest of the opposition, defended it: its framers gloried in
 the production. Others, less violent, eluded the merits
 of the paper in question, and reasoned on the general
 right of petitioning his majesty, and the propriety of ad-
 dressing him at the present time. The supporters of min-
 isters confined themselves to this specific remonstrance,
 which they contended, and proved, to be insulting, injuri-
 ous, and dangerous; particularly dwelling on that part of
 it which presumed to deny the legality of the present par-
 liament, as tending to deprive the people of their repre-

are dis-
 cussed in
 parlia-
 ment.

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sentatives, and to annul every act which had passed since the general election. Both houses addressed his majesty, thanking him for his answer to the remonstrance. Several motions were made for an address to his majesty to dissolve the parliament, but these were negatived. Lord Chatham was extremely active in anti-ministerial propositions; and the admirer of the highest wisdom and patriotism of those times must regret, that the heat of party contention should so far have transported this illustrious senator, as to have induced him to countenance and support the very irreverent remonstrance of the city of London.

Bill for dis-
qualifying
officers of
the reve-
nue from
voting at
elections,

An attempt was made to diminish the influence of the crown, by proposing a bill to disqualify certain officers of the revenue from voting for members of parliament; and a motion to this effect was made on the 11th of February. The supporters of the proposition observed, that the chief officers of the revenue were disqualified from sitting in parliament, and that there were the same reasons for incapacitating inferior officers from being electors. Both classes of servants must be under the direction of the crown; and the departments of the revenue were become so numerous, as to render that influence inconsistent with the purposes of a free representation. Ministers replied, that the motion presumed in its objects a dependence and corruption which was not proved; on this presumption, it proposed to place holders of those employments in a worse situation than their fellow countrymen; and thus to deprive many individuals of the rights of British subjects: the motion was rejected. On the 28th, a proposition was made for inspecting the accounts of the civil list during the year 1769. The nation (it was urged) had a right to examine how its late grants had been employed: if the money had been properly used, no inconvenience could accrue to ministers from the inspection; if improperly applied, it was the duty of the house to make the discovery. It was answered, that the civil list being entirely the revenue of the crown, the crown had a right to expend it at will; if an application had been made for an additional grant, the expenditure of the first ought to be investigated to ascertain its necessity; but that not being the

is nega-
tived,

case, there were no reasons to require or to justify an examination: on these grounds, the motion was negatived.

On the 7th of March, Mr. George Grenville proposed a bill for regulating contested elections. These were formerly tried by a select committee; by degrees the committees were so enlarged, as to become open to every member: so great a number of judges, not bound by oath, decided very often according to party connexion, or some other partiality, instead of justice; and many instances occurred of unfair nominations. To remedy this evil, Mr. Grenville proposed a plan analogous to a trial by jury. Before a contest could be tried, the house must consist of not less than a hundred members; the names of all present were to be put into boxes, and to be drawn out till they amounted to forty-nine; the two litigants were alternally to strike off one of these, till they were reduced to thirteen; these, with two nominees, were to be sworn a select committee, empowered to examine records, papers, and witnesses, and to determine finally. The bill was passed into a law, since well known by the name of the Grenville act, and is considered as having made a very beneficial change in the fairness of decisions.

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Mr. Grenville's bill for regulating contested elections,

is passed into a law.

AMERICAN affairs began in March to occupy the attention of parliament, and first offered to the public an opportunity of judging of lord North's ministerial talents. The British merchants who traded to America, had sustained immense losses by the rejection of their goods; and, apprehending ruin if the associations should continue, presented petitions to parliament, stating their sufferings, and praying its intervention. On the 5th of March, lord North proposed a bill for the repeal of part of the act of 1767, which laid a duty on paper, painted colours, and glass, but continuing the part of the same law which exacted a duty from tea. The minister assigned as a reason for bringing in the bill, the dangerous combinations which the imposts had produced in America, with the losses and dissatisfaction which they had caused among the merchants at home. He strongly expressed his disapprobation of the act in question, but censured it as an unproductive impost, not as an impolitic claim: the articles taxed (he said) being chiefly British manufactures, ought to have been encour-

Lord North's bill for repealing all duties on America except on tea.

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aged instead of being burdened with assessments. The duty on tea was continued, for maintaining the parliamentary right of taxation. An impost of three-pence in the pound could never be opposed by the colonists, unless they were determined to rebel against Britain. Besides, a duty on that article payable in England, and amounting to nearly one shilling in the pound, was taken off on its exportation to America; so that the inhabitants of the colonies saved nine-pence in the pound. The minister here discovered that he had not investigated the state of affairs, and the sentiments of the people; for a cursory attention to the declarations and acts of the Americans must have demonstrated, that their objection was not to the amount, but to the claim; and experience might have convinced him, that no temporising expedients, no half measures, would be effectual. Different as the professed opinions of the Rockingham administration and of lord North were, their policy sprang from similar indecision. Wishing to please both parties, they left the chief matter in dispute undetermined, and of course a subject of future contention. The members of opposition did not fail to see and to predict the inefficacy of the minister's plan; they repeated the arguments on the injustice and inexpediency of taxing America, and the evils which had arisen from the attempt: the minister's propositions, however, were carried by a great majority. This act may be considered as an omen of lord North's administration; at least, so far as a display of character justifies predictions respecting future conduct and its result. Discerning men saw meritorious intentions and ready ingenuity, without the accompaniment of that enlarged political wisdom, firmness, and decision of mind, which only when united can constitute a beneficial statesman.

Tumult at
Boston.

THE very day on which the resolutions were passed that lord North intended for satisfying the colonies, a quarrel arose at Boston between some of the inhabitants and a party of soldiers. While the troops sent to Boston in 1768, remained in that town, the people had been awed into quietness; but in the end of 1769, a great part of them having been ordered to other quarters, those who remained were treated with the most provoking insolence;

they were lampooned and abused in the newspapers; ridiculed and reviled, if met singly or in small bodies in the streets; and disturbed and interrupted in the discharge of their duty. In the evening of the 5th of March, a dispute happened between two or three young men of the town, and as many soldiers, near the barracks; virulent language produced blows; the soldiers proved victorious, and pursued their adversaries through the streets. The bells were rung to alarm the populace; a mob assembled round the customhouse, and threatened the sentinel's life that was posted there; captain Preston, the officer on guard, sent a party to protect not only the soldier, but the customhouse, and soon after proceeded thither himself. The mob, becoming very violent, attacked the soldiers with stones and clubs; the captain, as long as it was possible, kept his men from firing; but at length, their lives being in danger, they were obliged to use their arms in their own defence: four of the insurgents were killed, and some others wounded; the tumult became much more general, and the rest of the troops were assembled. The governor having called together the council, they advised the removal of the troops, which was accordingly ordered. Captain Preston surrendered himself for trial, and the soldiers under his command were taken into custody. Every unfair means that could be used were employed to inflame the people against the defendants, and to prejudice the cause. In the newspapers, and various other publications, the troops were represented as guilty of deliberate murder; dead bodies were carried in procession through the town, and held out as the victims of military execution. Fortunately for the cause of justice, the trials were put off for several months, so that the ferment subsided: captain Preston was honourably acquitted; as were all the soldiers, except two, who were convicted of manslaughter.

Captain Preston and the soldiers interfere.

Are tried and acquitted.

THE account of this tumult arrived in England before the rising of parliament, and it was expected that ministry

x See Stedman, vol. i. p. 75.

y Mr. Hutchinson had been lately appointed to that office. The Americans had petitioned for the removal of sir Francis Bernard; and that gentleman having returned to England to defend himself, vindicated his conduct to the satisfaction and approbation of his sovereign. Disdaining, however, to resume his authority among people who had solicited its annihilation, he resigned his employment.

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Minister,
wishing
concilia-
tion, over-
looks the
riot.Session
rises.War be-
tween Rus-
sia and
Turkey.Catharine
is favoured
by Eng-
land.

would have immediately proposed taking it into consideration. They, however, purposely waved the discussion, entertaining great hopes of the conciliatory effect of the recent repeal; and as the disturbances had taken place when that was not known in America, they trusted that the account of the new resolutions would change their sentiments, and produce dispositions to order, tranquillity, and harmony. They thought it therefore prudent to abstain from investigations which might again inflame the colonists; and the session closed toward the end of May.

A WAR was now raging on the continent, in which Britain, without actually interfering, warmly favoured one of the parties. For several years it had been part of the British policy to renew and increase that intercourse with Russia, which, from political, but still more from commercial motives, former kings had cultivated, but which had been diminished in the last war by the alliance of the czarina with our enemies. Turkey had been for successive ages on amicable terms with France, and to French ports flowed the greater part of the beneficial commerce. The British government and nation earnestly desired the success of Catharine, our friend and ally, against Turkey, the friend and ally of our rival, and were strongly interested in the events of the war. These at this time diversified public attention, and prevented it from brooding solely on internal contests and colonial disturbances. The war which had been declared between Russia and Turkey, was carried on with great fury by both parties: but by no means with equal ability and skill. Catharine employed the winter of 1768 and 1769 in increasing her armies, and making pecuniary provisions for supporting the war: she also established a new council for military and political affairs, over which she presided herself. The Russian troops, hardy and courageous, had the advantage of great and recent experience, in the wars with Frederic, and the contest with the Poles. The Turks were much inferior to the Russians in military discipline, and for the last thirty years had not been engaged in any war. They had never, like the powers of christian Europe, introduced so much of science into their tactics, as, during peace, to improve themselves in the military art; the force and goodness of their armies depen-

ded solely on actual exercise, and experience in the field became torpid by long cessation of effort. They had formed their empire by the sword, and had awed the conquered for several centuries by keeping it perpetually drawn. Fear only of the courage and warlike force that they saw incessantly displayed, had kept the Greek christians in a subjection, which, from religious, moral, and political principles, filled them with indignation and abhorrence. They had from religion a very warm attachment to Russia, and since she had arrived at great power, considering her as the natural patron of the Greek faith, they were evidently disposed to seek her protection, whenever an attempt for their relief could be made. Seeing their oppressors, once so terrible, now enervated by long inaction, they began to entertain hopes of emancipation. Informed of the state of Turkey, and of the sentiments of her Grecian brethren, the lofty genius of Catharine conceived, and her bold spirit executed, a project which astonished all Europe. This was, to send from the recesses of the Baltic to the Mediterranean a fleet, which should excite and support insurrections of the Greek christians, intercept the intercourse between Constantinople and its granaries in Egypt and other parts of the empire, command the Archipelago and Levant, and spread alarm through the vast dominions of the sultan. Her mind, capacious and comprehensive as well as inventive, had carried its views to the whole of her interests. She earnestly cultivated the friendship of England, and thereby was powerfully assisted in her naval schemes, by having the advantage of our ports both in this island and Gibraltar, and also of able officers and skilful pilots. By land she made such a disposition of her forces, as was best calculated for speedily rendering the enemy's country the seat of war; and though distant, profiting from the cooperation of her fleet, and diverting the force of her antagonist. The campaign was opened as early as the climate would permit: the Turkish Tartars, accustomed to brave the utmost rigour of the winter, made an incursion into the Russian Ukraine, plundered and desolated the country, before the Russian troops took the field; and, though afterwards obliged to retire, secured their booty. In April, prince Gallitzin, commander in chief of the Rus-

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sians, posted himself on the Neister, to oppose the main army of the Turks, who were marching into Moldavia, while general Romanzow was placed on the Nieper, to watch the Turkish Tartars. Before the arrival of the Turks, Gallitzin attempted to seize Chockzim; but, being strongly fortified and garrisoned, it held out till the arrival of the Turkish army rendered it prudent to desist. The vizier, aware of the superior discipline of the enemy, wisely avoided a general engagement, and harassed the Russians by marches and skirmishes. The janizaries, abundantly brave but unused to fatigue, longed for a general battle, in which they assured themselves of a victory that would put an end to their labours, and suffer them to return to the luxuries of the capital. Esteeming the cautious policy of their commanders cowardice, they transmitted intemperate complaints to the divan. The court, weak as wicked, and ignorant as despotic, without inquiry put the vizier to death, and appointed Ali Pacha, a man of fierce brutal courage, his successor. This nomination proved very favourable to the Russians. Ali Pacha gave Gallitzin battle, and was defeated with very great loss; he soon after fought him again, when the Russians obtained a decisive victory, and reduced the fortress of Chockzim; and before the close of the campaign, they overran Moldavia and Wallachia. The Russians this summer had various engagements with the Polish confederates, but none decisive, as they were obliged by the Turkish war to employ so many troops elsewhere.

Herarmies
overrun
Moldavia
and Walla-
chia;

It was not till the beginning of the year 1770, that the Russian fleet, under count Orloff, sailed for the Mediterranean: after having been shattered in the North seas, the armament stopped at Portsmouth to refit; and departing, arrived at Port Mahon. After undergoing a second reparation, they sailed from Minorca about the end of February, reached cape Metapan,^a took Missitra,^a ravaged the coasts, proceeded to Asia Minor, burnt the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Skio,^b and, cutting off the communication between European Turkey and the most fertile provinces in other quarters, distressed Constantino-

^a Anciently Tenuus.

^a Sparta.

^b Chios.

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ple. The Russian armies continued uninterruptedly successful; Romanzow, after repeated victories, one of which at the confluence of the Pruth and the Danube, was glorious and decisive, conquered all Turkey beyond that river except Bessarabia. Here, however, count Panin besieged and took the famous town of Bender by storm, and reduced the whole province. Thus all the Turkish dominions from Poland to the Danube southward, and from Hungary to the Euxine eastward, were now in the possession of Russia. The neighbouring powers regarded these successes of Catharine with jealousy and apprehension. The house of Austria was much alarmed at the conquests of so ambitious and enterprising a power in its immediate vicinity. Even Frederic, intimately as he was connected with Russia, did not rejoice at her great accession of territory. Two interviews took place this year between the Prussian king and the emperor; at which Joseph declared that neither Maria Theresa nor himself would suffer Catharine to retain Moldavia and Wallachia. Frederic, though he did not differ in sentiment from the emperor on this subject, was desirous of restoring peace between the courts of Petersburg and Constantinople, by such means as would preserve his amity and alliance with Russia, which it was his interest to maintain. Frederic had, at the beginning of their disputes, strongly dissuaded the Turks from going to war with Russia; and the disasters that proceeded from not following his advice, gave him great credit with the Ottoman Porte. He dexterously suggested, without any direct proposition, that they should apply for his mediation; which measure they very readily adopted, and when requested to interfere, he advised them also to apply to the court of Vienna. Though not of themselves disposed to solicit the house of Austria to be their umpire, yet, from their great deference to the opinion of Frederic, they agreed. A negotiation commenced; but, from the jarring interests and views of both the principals and mediators, it met with various obstacles, and did not at that time produce a peace. France, accustomed to take so active a share in the disputes of other European powers, was now occupied in disputes between the king and the parliaments, important in them-

alarm
Austria
and Prussia.

France;
disputes
between
the king
and parliament.

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selves, but still more momentous in the spirit of liberty which they exhibited. She was farther distressed by a scarcity of provisions ; and her commercial interests were greatly injured by the bankruptcy of her East India company. On the 16th of May, the nuptials were solemnized between the dauphin, grandson of the king, and the princess Marie Antoinette, daughter of the empress queen, which many years after had so fatal a dissolution.

Dispute
between
Britain
and Spain
about
Falkland's
islands.

IN the course of this year, a dispute arose between Britain and Spain, which had nearly terminated in a war : the ground of the contest was, Falkland's islands, in the South Seas. Captain Davis, who in 1592, had been sent to accompany captain Thomas Cavendish in his last voyage, which proved so fatal^c, having either parted with his commodore, or deserted him on the east coast of South America, was driven by storms toward the Streights of Magellan, where he discovered the land now called Falkland's islands ; but being in the greatest distress, he left them without observation, and without giving them a name. Two years after, sir Richard Hawkins being in the same seas, again saw the islands, and in honour of his queen called them Hawkins's Maiden Land. In 1598, Sebald de West, a Dutch navigator, came to the same islands, and supposing himself the first discoverer, called them, from his own name, Sebald's islands. England heard nothing more of them for near a century, so that even their existence was called in question. In the reign of king William, however, Strong, an English mariner, found them out, and gave them the name of Falkland's islands.^d Some other navigators touched at them in the reign of queen Anne, yet they were still reckoned of no importance ; from lord Anson's voyage, however, it was concluded that it would be very beneficial to this nation to have a friendly port and place of refreshment much nearer Cape Horn than the Brazils.^e In 1748, in consequence of the representation made in Anson's voyage, some

^c See Cavendish's Voyages, in the reign of Elizabeth.

^d His Journal was never printed, but is in manuscript in the British museum.

^e This idea was not new to England, though never successfully executed. In the reign of Charles II. sir John Narborough attempted to establish a settlement on the coast of Patagonia ; but, though eagerly and liberally supported by the king, he found the design totally impracticable.

sloops were sent to examine Falkland's islands, and make farther discoveries in the South Seas. Mr. Wall, the Spanish ambassador, having been informed of this expedition, maintained the right of the Spaniards to the exclusive dominion of the South Sea, and remonstrated against the destination of these ships; but the British ministry declared, that the examination of the Falkland's islands should be their sole object. Similar remonstrances having been made to our ambassador at the court of Spain, the same intentions were avowed. Falkland's islands were no more thought of till after the peace of 1763; when, as has been already mentioned, commodore Byron took possession of them in the name of king George, and represented them as a much more valuable acquisition than had been before conceived. In 1766, the king of Spain sent some troops from Buenos Ayres to the port which had been occupied by the French, and established a settlement there, to which he gave the name of Solidade Carlier: in the same year, captain Macbride arrived at Port Egmont, situated on a different island, where he established a garrison. It does not appear, that either of these settlements knew of the other before the year 1769; in the November of which year, captain Hunt, of the Tamar frigate, cruising off the islands, fell in with a Spanish schooner from Solidade: he ordered the vessel to depart from the coast, as belonging to Great Britain. The governor of the Spanish settlement professed to suppose that the English commander was there only by accident; but said, that he had no right to send a command to Spaniards in the king of Spain's own dominions. Captain Hunt asserted the claim of the English, from discovery and occupancy. Reciprocal warnings to quit the islands were frequently repeated during the months of December and January, when captain Hunt departed for England. The governor of Buenos Ayres now sent an armament of five frigates to Port Egmont; but captain Farmer of the Swift frigate, and captain Maltby of the Favourite, prepared to defend the garrison, and warned the Spanish commodore to quit that harbour; adding, he might be convinced that the king of Great Britain and the British navy were fully competent to exact satisfaction for any insult

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that should be offered them by Spain, or any other power. The Spaniards, however, landed their troops under cover of cannon, and invested the garrison. The British commanders having thus ascertained the commencement of hostilities by the Spaniards, and being from the inferiority of force totally unequal to defence, offered terms of capitulation; by which it was stipulated, that the English should within a specified time evacuate Port Egmont. Departing from that island, the English captains arrived in England in October. Informed of this proceeding, the British ministry applied to prince Masserano, the Spanish ambassador, who acknowledged that he had heard from Madrid of the transaction; but that Buccarelli, the Spanish governor had acted without any specific orders from his king. Being asked, however, if he would, in the name of his master, disavow Buccarelli's violence, he said, that he could not answer, without orders from his court. The British government now directed Mr. Harris, the ambassador at Madrid, to demand the restitution of Falkland's islands, with a disavowal of Buccarelli's hostilities, and in the mean time vigorously prepared a naval armament. The answer of Grimaldi, the Spanish minister, to the first application of Britain, was cold, ambiguous, and unsatisfactory: no particular orders (he said) had been sent to the governor to drive the English from their settlement; but Buccarelli had acted agreeably to the general injunctions of his sovereign, that governors in America should resist encroachments on the Spanish dominions, and therefore had merely done his duty. The court of Spain soon after offered by mutual concession to accommodate their differences; if Britain would disavow the warning given to the Spaniards by captain Hunt, Spain would in like manner disavow the violence of Buccarelli. This proffer was indignantly refused by the court of London; for though captain Hunt had given warning, he had offered no violence; but the Spaniards had committed a hostile aggression; an actual injury had been done to Britain, and must be repaired. The Spanish court persisted in the proposal of reciprocal disavowals: but the English ministers adhered to their first demand, continued their preparations, and at the close of the year, Mr. Har-

Spain, the aggressor, refuses adequate satisfaction:

Trusts to the cooperation of France;

ris, the ambassador, was directed to withdraw from Spain. The court of Madrid now assuming a very different tone, showed itself disposed to conciliation at the expense of concession. Spain was at this time chiefly governed by the court of Versailles; and the duke de Choiseul was desirous of engaging both kingdoms in a war with England, in which he hoped the distracted state of the internal and colonial affairs of Britain might render the house of Bourbon successful, and compensate the disasters of the former war; and that he himself, not having to contend against the counsels of a Pitt, might acquire triumphant glory. But the duke de Choiseul having in the recent disputes shown himself friendly to the popular party, and having lost the countenance of the king and his mistress, was judged no longer fit to be prime minister, and was dismissed from all his offices. His successor adopted a pacific policy, and this was the principal cause that effected the change in the Spanish propositions.

On the 22d of January, 1771, prince Masserano delivered a declaration of the king of Spain, disavowing the violent enterprise of Buccarelli, and promising to restore Port Egmont and the fort, with all the artillery and stores, according to the inventory taken before the evacuation. The declaration added: this engagement to restore Port Egmont cannot, nor ought, in any wise, to affect the question of the prior right of sovereignty of the Malonine, otherwise called Falkland's islands. Lord Rochford, who had lately succeeded lord Weymouth as secretary of state for the southern department, was instructed by his majesty to answer, that as the court of Spain disavowed the expedition, and bound itself to restitution, the king would look upon that declaration, and the full performance of the engagements, as a satisfaction for the injury.

but being disappointed, offers concessions.

which satisfy the British court.

AMERICA was somewhat more tranquil during the present, than in the several preceding years. The want of indulgences, to which they had long been habituated, was severely felt,^f and the inhabitants became weary of their combinations. As soon as they were informed that a considerable part of the noxious act was repealed, they

America becomes more tranquil.

^f Stedman, vol. i. p. 7.

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resolved to confine their association to the prohibition of tea. The most violent malcontents, indeed, endeavoured to keep the people to the association, on the extensive principle which had been first adopted, but they could not prevail. The trade of this country with America began again to flourish; and subsequent to captain Preston's treatment, there was no material disturbance even in Massachusetts during that year.

Discon-
tents con-
tinue in
England.

London
addresses
the king :

dignified
answer of
the sove-
reign.

Noted re-
ply of
Beckford,
the lord
mayor.

THE discontents at home were still, however, very prevalent, especially wherever the influence or example of the London citizens could operate. The corporation persevered in remonstrating to his majesty; and on the 23d of May they presented an address still more indecent and disrespectful than that which they had delivered before. Common sense must suppose, that they intended to provoke and insult their sovereign, in making an application which contained such strong and devious reasons for rejection and reprehension; an application to which the king could grant no favourable answer, consistently with regard to the honour of his crown, and the rights of his parliament.⁵ On the address being presented, his majesty answered, "I should have been wanting to the public, as well as to myself, if I had not expressed my dissatisfaction at the late address. My sentiments continue the same; and I should ill deserve to be considered as the father of my people, if I could suffer myself to make such an use of my prerogative, as I cannot but think inconsistent with the interest, and dangerous to the constitution of the kingdom." To this answer, Beckford, the lord mayor, requested leave to reply; a request, which, though unusual and indeed unprecedented, his majesty granted. Having deprecated the displeasure which his majesty had expressed against the London remonstrance, he concluded in terms perhaps the most extraordinary that had ever been used by a British subject to a British king: "Permit me, sire, farther to observe, that whoever has already dared, or shall hereafter endeavour, by false insinuations and suggestions, to alienate your majesty's affections from your loyal subjects in general, and from the city of London in par-

⁵ See address of the city of London, May 23d, 1770.

" ticular, and to withdraw your confidence in and regard
 " for your people, *is an enemy to your majesty's person*
 " *and family, a violator of the public peace, and a betrayer*
 " *of our happy constitution as it was established at the*
 " *glorious and necessary revolution.*" To this expostula-
 tion the speaker appeared to expect no answer, and none
 was given; and his majesty afterwards intimated his
 desire, that such an irregular procedure should not be
 repeated.

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MR. BECKFORD was endued with amiable and respect-
 able qualities, though by circumstances and situation led
 to so very reprehensible a conduct. Possessed of immense
 wealth; placed in a society wherein opulence was deemed
 a criterion of excellence; receiving from his associates ob-
 sequious devotion as having arrived at the pinnacle of that
 eminence which they themselves were respectively seeking,
 he did not allow their just weight to talents, rank, and
 high office. Liberal in his donations, splendid in his
 entertainments, magnificent in his displays of riches, pro-
 moting the wishes and designs of the city of London, he
 acquired popularity even to adoration. Accustomed to
 such authority over the class of men with whom he was
 most conversant himself he expected the same control
 over others. Highly valuing the city of London on
 account of its aggregate wealth, its estimation of himself,
 and adoption of his sentiments and views, he fancied that
 the intimation of its opinions by him should have irresis-
 tible authority. Enraged at finding reproachful and impe-
 rious remonstrances to the first personage in the state disre-
 garded, he had proceeded to still more flagrant and arrogant
 irreverence. Beckford's conduct, by some charged with
 republican licentiousness, appears much more probably to
 have arisen from the pride of wealth seeking to overbear
 rank and dignity, and irritated to rudeness and insolence
 because it was repressed in its attempt. The flame which
 he had been so instrumental in spreading, raged after his
 death:^b very violent resolutions were passed in the common
 council; another remonstrance to his majesty was framed,
 and, being of a similar tenor, deservedly experienced a
 similar reception. Petitions and remonstrances flowed

^b He died June 21st, 1770.

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from various parts; but, though some of them were by no means decorous, yet none of them rose to the audacity of the London addresses. While popular discontent was industriously kept alive, the ministerial party acquired additional strength in parliament. Mr. George Grenville died in November; and as the party of which he had been the head, had no longer the same bond of connexion, many of its members joined the administration.

Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

ON the 13th of November, parliament met; and the principal internal subjects which employed its attention, were the liberty of the press, and the rights of juries. Publications arising from the Middlesex election, and censuring the conduct of parliament and administration, had been repeatedly the subject of judicial animadversion. Lord Mansfield, in a charge to the jury on the criminal trial of Woodfall for publishing Junius's letter to the king, had promulgated the following doctrine: "In cases of libels, juries are to judge of the *facts and tendency only*, but not, of the *INTENTION*; and the truth of the allegations cannot be pleaded in abatement of the guilt." Lords Chatham and Camden in the house of peers, and Messrs. Glynn and Dunning in the house of commons, took the lead in reprobating this doctrine as inimical to the constitutional rights of juries, contrary to law, repugnant to practice, and injurious to the dearest liberties of the people. Lord Mansfield endeavoured to defend and justify his conduct: his directions to juries (he affirmed) were not new; he had proceeded according to the practice of the most approved judges of former times, and uniformly adopted the same mode himself without any question or censure. Lord Camden denied that such a practice was sanctioned by authority, or that by the law of the land juries were circumscribed within stricter limits in the case of libels, than in any other subject of jurisdiction. An inquiry into the conduct of lord Mansfield was proposed, together with an examination of the legal rights of juries, and motions were made for this investigation in both houses, but were negatived. Lord Mansfield left a paper with the clerk of the house, containing the unanimous opinion of the judges in favour of his doctrines. Lord Camden, on the other hand, pledged himself to prove from law and precedent,

Lord
Mansfield's
doctrines
on the law
of libel;

are contro-
verted by
lord Cam-
den.

that this doctrine, though approved by the judges, was not conformable to the law of England: he proposed queries on the tenets of the paper, and desired that a day might be fixed for discussing this question; but lord Mansfield, thus challenged to a contest of legal disquisition, either doubtful of victory, or deeming the combat imprudent, declined the invitation. The public was left with an impression, that lord Camden's doctrine, certainly more consistent with constitutional liberty, and with the analogy of the general rights of juries to scrutinize intention as well as to learn mere fact, was virtually admitted to be also conformable to law and precedent. If lord Mansfield could have proved the alleged exceptions in the case of libels, it was conceived that he would have adduced his proofs, in order to prevent future animadversion, as well as to justify his past jurisdiction. Men of ability and knowledge, who, without considering either preceded opinions or practice, merely argued from reason and conscience, could not discover why INTENTION should not be taken into the juridical account in estimating defamatory guilt when intention was necessary to constitute guilt of every other species.

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Camden challenges the chief justice to a legal disquisition on the subject.

Lord Mansfield declines the contest.

prosecution of the printers.

DEFAMATION was, indeed, never more licentious, than at the present time, on political subjects. One very common expedient of party calumny was, misrepresentation of parliamentary speeches in newspapers, so as to render them either absurd or odious. Two printers,ⁱ alleged to be most culpable in these injurious mistatements, were summoned to the bar of the house, but paid no attention to the intimation. The serjeant at arms was ordered to take them into custody: they were not to be found. Six other printers were commanded to appear before the house on similar charges; five of them obeying, were reprimanded and dismissed, but the sixth^k still disregarding the notice, was ordered to be taken into custody. The three printers, being severally apprehended in the city, were carried respectively before Mr. Alderman Wilkes, Mr. Alderman Oliver, and Crosby the lord mayor; who not only discharged the printers, but required the officers who

ⁱ Thomson, of the Gazetteer; and Wheble, of the Middlesex Journal.

^k Miller, of the London Evening Post.

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had executed the warrants to give bail to appear at the next sessions, to stand trial for assault and false imprisonment. Informed of these transactions, the house was filled with indignation, and the lord mayor was ordered to attend in his place. The magistrate justified his conduct, on the ground of his oath of office compelling him to preserve inviolate the franchises of the city; one of which was, that by the charters no citizen could have law process served against him, but by the city officers. It was asserted by the commons, that the exemption of the city could not be pleaded against the privileges of the house. This doctrine, invalidating chartered rights, and the act of parliament by which they were sanctioned, being supported neither by precedent nor argument, was strongly controverted in the house, but was admitted by very great majorities. The house directed the records respecting their messenger to be expunged, and all proceedings to be stopped. With this order, by which one branch of the legislature proposed to suspend the law of the land, the magistrate refused to comply; and Crosby and Oliver were committed to confinement, for what the commons styled contumacy. The city of London, by its proceedings ever since the Middlesex election, was extremely offensive to ministry and its supporters in parliament; and the house of commons in this instance was evidently actuated by resentment, rather than guided by magnanimous and sound policy. Many, who had most severely censured the remonstrances of the city, blamed this procedure against its principal magistrates, as a violent, impolitic, and illegal attack upon persons, whose conduct, however deserving of reprehension, did not render such animadversion either wise or just. Indeed, ministers themselves appeared to have thought that they had carried their violence too far. They summoned Mr. Wilkes to repair to the house; but he refused to attend in any other character than as member for Middlesex. They issued orders for his appearance at the bar on the 8th of April; but, aware that he would not attend, they some days before adjourned the house to the 9th. This palpable evasion impressed the public with an opinion, that the commons were now either sensible that they had done what was wrong, or were

afraid to do what they conceived to be right. The city of London actively supported its magistrates during these transactions, and insisted that the whole charge of their prosecution and defence should be defrayed by the corporation. Their confinement could only continue till parliament was prorogued, and at the end of the session they were liberated. This imprisonment of the magistrates fanned the popular flame, injured instead of serving the cause of government, and greatly diminished the respect of the people for their representatives. So pernicious is it for either lawgivers or judges to deliberate or decide under the influence of violent passion or prejudice.¹

A SELECT committee, appointed agreeably to Mr. Grenville's late bill, for determining a contested election for the borough of Shoreham in Sussex, brought to light about this time a remarkable scene of corruption. The returning officer had declared a candidate supported by only thirty-seven voters duly elected, in preference to another who had eighty-seven in his favour. When examined by the committee on what appeared to be so flagrant a partiality, he in his exculpatory evidence established the following facts. The majority of freemen of the corporation had formed themselves into a society which they called the christian club, professedly to promote pious and charitable purposes; and several acts were occasionally performed to accredit their profession. But the real object of the combination was, to sell the borough to the highest bidder, and distribute the money among the pious confederates. Paying to religion that homage which conscience often exacts from men violating its most sacred duties, they bound themselves by solemn oaths to fidelity in their associated villany; and added legal instruments, in bonds with large penalties, to secure their adherents to this illegal engagement. These professed religionists then, without scruple, took the oath against bribery and corruption. The returning officer had himself belonged to the club, but, being disgusted with their conduct, had quitted their party. Aware of their principles and established practice, he by vigilance ascertained, and was able to prove, that a sum of money had been distributed among eighty-one of the majority,

Singular
confederacy
for bribery
in the
borough of
Shoreham.

¹ See, in Sallust, Cæsar's speech on the punishment of the conspirators.

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whose votes, therefore, in his return he had not estimated. The officer was censured for his assumption of illegal power; but, the facts being proved, a law was made, incapacitating the eighty-one freemen from voting at elections.

1771.

Opposition
censure
the terms
admitted
from
Spain.

Of external politics, the only important subject of discussion this year was, the satisfaction offered by Spain concerning Falkland's islands, and accepted by this country. According to opposition, the proffer of Spain, accompanied with the reservation of a right to the subject in dispute, was neither a satisfaction for past injury, nor a security against future. We had been obliged to prepare armaments, which cost us three millions sterling; and it was strictly just, that Spain should indemnify us for an expenditure which originated in her aggression, and increased to its present amount by her reluctance. The convention had procured no recompense for this enormous expense; but even as a restitution, Port Egmont, and not all Falkland's islands, had been ceded; whereas our right to the whole was as clear as to that part. Although the court of Madrid had disavowed the act of hostility as proceeding from particular instruction, yet she had justified it as implied in her general directions to American governors. Ministers ought to have demanded the disavowal of this general order, and of the exorbitant and absurd claim to exclusive dominion in the South Sea, on which it was founded. By the law of nations, and even by the treaty of Utrecht, we were entitled to demand the punishment of Buccarelli: we ought also to have exacted the complete settlement of the Manilla ransom: in short, the agreement, neither complete nor decisive, contained the seeds of future hostility. Ministers replied, that the claim to Falkland's islands had never been allowed by Spain. Our people had really given the first insult, by warning the Spaniards to depart from an island which they considered as their own. Spain had given up the British settlement and property which her officers had seized; and what more could be expected from the most successful war? Indemnification for expense, was a redress which, in modern treaties of peace, it was very unusual for a victor to demand. We had supported and satisfied the honour of England; and

our dignity being secure, our interest required that we should live upon the most amicable terms with a country with which we had the closest commercial ties. War with Spain would soon have joined France in the same cause, more closely have cemented the alliance between these powers, and involved us in hostilities with the whole house of Bourbon. They accused opposition, of a desire to embroil this country in a war with Spain, in hopes that some disaster might ensue, which would expose administration to the public resentment, and drive them from office.^k A great majority of both houses, after very violent debates, declared their approbation of the convention with Spain.

THE discussion of this subject incidentally caused a disagreement between the two houses, which lasted through the whole session. Before the adjustment was completed, the duke of Manchester made a motion for an address to expedite our preparations, recommending at the same time certain dispositions of our forces. Ministers thinking these discussions not prudent before strangers, of whom there was a great number in the house, proposed that the house should be cleared. There happened at this time to be several members from the other house attending with a bill, and these were included in the order for departure. The commons considering this procedure as derogatory from their dignity, gave a similar order for exclusion, without the exception of peers. The misunderstanding for the three last months of the session, prevented all intercourse between the houses, except in mere matters of business; and to the great disappointment and displeasure of the public, excluded all others from both.

THE supplies, which were granted this session under the apprehension of a war with Spain, were liberal. The ways and means were, a loan of 1,800,000*l.* on exchequer bills; an increase of land tax to four shillings; a lottery; the surplusage of the sinking fund; a small tonnage upon shipping; with additional duties on tobacco,

^k This charge, though advanced in parliament, was much more explicitly detailed in ministerial writings, and especially in Dr. Johnson's celebrated pamphlet upon Falkland's islands.

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teas, spirits, wines, and other foreign goods. These taxes, chiefly affecting luxuries, met with little opposition or animadversion. Indeed, this budget manifested merely common official experience, and neither proved the minister to possess, nor to want, financial talents. Parliament being prorogued on the 8th of May, closed a session more remarkable for the contentious violence of its debates, and the passionate heat of its propositions, than for the wisdom of its deliberations, or the importance of its decrees.

CHAP. X.

State of the colonies.—Effects of lord North's conciliatory attempt.—Striking diversity of sentiment and spirit between New England and other colonies—is not sufficiently regarded by ministers.—Discontents in England begin to subside.—Meeting of parliament.—Petition for exemption from subscribing the thirty-nine articles.—Opposed by one class on grounds of theological principle—by another on political expediency.—Petition of the dissenters.—Haughton's bill for the relief of the dissenters is passed the house of commons, but thrown out by the lords.—Clerical nullum tempus bill is rejected.—Law for restricting the marriage of the royal family.—Arguments against it—for it—passed.—East India affairs.—Supplies.—Session rises.—Death of the princess dowager of Wales.—Operations between Russia and Turkey.—Scheme of Frederic and Catharine for partitioning Poland—offer Austria a share—she objects to the inequality of the division—her scruples are vanquished by a larger distribution.—Dismemberment of Poland.—Revolution in Sweden.—State of Denmark.—Incapacity of the king.—Character and conduct of the queen.—Artifices of the queen dowager.—Struensee.—Accusation and arrest of Matilda.—Remonstrances of the court of London.—His Britannic majesty demands and rescues his suffering sister—and affords her an asylum in his German dominions.

THE act of 1770, did not fully satisfy the wishes of the American people; in most of the colonies, however, its influence was so great, that during 1771 tranquillity prevailed. There were, indeed, in all the provinces, demagogues, who strenuously endeavoured to convince their countrymen that the repeal had been extorted by resistance, and not conceded by justice; and that therefore they ought to persist in opposing British government,

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1771.

State of
the colo-
nies.

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Effects of
Lord
North's
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tempts.

The diver-
sity of sen-
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other pro-
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garded by
ministers.

until every disagreeable law should be rescinded. But the middle and southern colonies, now not actually feeling any grievance in the operation of the duty, were not to be disturbed by abstract claims, and a general calm succeeded to the late ferment. New England, however, and especially Massachusetts Bay, was far from being equally quiet. The establishment of a board of customs, necessary for the effectual execution of the navigation act, and the activity of the navy officers in preventing contraband practices at the beginning of their opposition, had not been an ostensible subject of dissatisfaction; but they now expressed their sentiments openly against customs. In an address to the governor on the 5th of July 1771, they declared customs to be a tribute extorted from those who had a right to the absolute disposal of their property; and the principle now assumed, was a disavowal of the supremacy of Britain, which from the first establishment of the colonies had been acknowledged in America. The other provinces had objected to taxes, as an unconstitutional innovation; they asserted the claims of British subjects, and as British subjects required redress. The colonists of Massachusetts spoke and acted as members of independent communities; and the general tenor of their conduct manifested a disposition to separate from Great Britain as soon as a favourable opportunity should offer. The concessions which tranquillised their southern brethren, only served to render those turbulent republicans more insolent and violent. Ever since the removal of the troops, they had insulted, attacked, and abused the customhouse officers, and other servants of the crown; and demonstrated that nothing would restrain them from injustice and tumult, but an armed force. Had the British ministry accurately studied the diversity of provincial character, and employed able, popular, and eloquent men, to court and conciliate the southern and middle colonies, counteract the arts of the northern emissaries, and detach the votaries of monarchy from the abettors of republicanism, it is by no means improbable that they might have prevented the revolt from being general; and, if they had effected that great purpose, they would have had little difficulty in compelling, by vigour and decision, the democratical agitators

of Massachusetts to perform the duties of British subjects : but no such experiment was tried. Lord North appears to have formed no comprehensive plan for the government of America ; but to have satisfied himself with devising temporary expedients for removing particular discontents, as they showed themselves in overt acts of sedition and violence, without investigating principles and causes, or framing any general system either of conciliation or coercion.

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IN England, hostility to government became less violent. The city of London, indeed, persevered in imperious expostulation with the sovereign ; while the king had the magnanimous patience to answer insolent rudeness with mild politeness, and gave a very temperate though decisive denial, including a poignant censure for so frequent a repetition of such an absurd address. The discontents of the metropolis, however, were diverted by a schism between Wilkes and some of his late supporters ; especially Mr. Horne, afterwards so noted as a politician, and eminent as a philologist. These private disputes long occupied the adverse champions, and filled the press : though their causes and details be of no historical importance, yet their existence requires to be mentioned, since they tended to the diminution of those inflammatory proceedings which so long had disturbed the public peace. In other parts, the dissatisfaction became more languid in its efforts ; its outrageous violence seemed to be passed ; and though in some places it manifested a gloomy sullenness, yet, on the whole, a dawning prospect opened of returning tranquillity.

The dis-
contents in
England
begin to
subside.

THE situation of affairs abroad contained no grounds of apprehension respecting the peace of Great Britain : Spain had fulfilled her engagements by restoring Port Egmont ; and France continuing the scene of internal disturbance, which was heightened by the profligate and odious character of the duke d'Aguillon (now favourite and prime minister,) appeared to be without any intention of annoying her neighbours. Eastern Europe was occupied either as actors in hostile scenes, or very vigilant and interesting spectators. The year 1771 was therefore favourable to internal and colonial quiet, and threatened

CHAP. X. no interruption from abroad. Ministers acquired fresh accessions from the party of Mr. Grenville; besides, members of other connexions were now tired of opposing an administration that appeared to them firmly established.

1771.

1772.
Meeting of
parliament.

ON the 22d of January 1772, parliament assembled; and the first day's debate showed much less of asperity and acrimony, than the prelusive efforts to the contentions of the former sessions. The business of importance which earliest in the session engaged the attention of parliament, was a motion of ministers for voting twenty-five thousand seamen for the service of the current year. The French, it was said, had sent a strong fleet to India, it was therefore necessary for England to send thither a still more powerful force; the Spaniards had also a considerable armament in the West Indies, it was requisite for this country to overmatch them in that quarter; and the war between the Turks and the Russians rendered it proper to employ a stronger fleet in the Mediterranean, than was wanted in the time of peace. Opposition contended, that the force was greater than the exigency of the country demanded; but they suffered the motion to be carried without any division.

Petition
for exemp-
tion from
subscribing
the thirty-
nine arti-
cles:

EARLY in this session came before parliament, for the first time, a subject which has since been very frequently agitated, and has produced a vast variety of literary and political discussion. On the 6th of February, a petition was presented to the lower house, from some clergymen of the church of England, certain members of the learned professions of law and physic, and others, praying to be relieved from the necessity of subscribing the thirty-nine articles. Men had an inherent right, they said, held from God only, and subject to human authority, to use their own judgment in the interpretation of scripture. This natural right, they affirmed, was recognized by the original principles of reformation. Such a privilege, belonging to them as men and protestants, was violated by the imposition of subscriptions to certain articles of faith, that did not flow from Christ and his apostles, but were drawn up by human beings as fallible as themselves. These subscriptions were farther represented as a great hindrance to the diffusion of true religion, by discouraging the study of

the real sense of the scriptures, and creating animosities among fellow protestants: the diversity of opinions held by the established clergy concerning some of the articles caused dissensions, and the disputes among professed believers encouraged infidelity. The petitioning members of the two other learned professions complained, that they suffered peculiar hardships in being obliged, at their first admission to the university (*matriculation*), when so immature in age and knowledge for deep disquisitions, to subscribe to a variety of theological propositions, in order to attain academical degrees in their respective faculties, while their opinions on those subjects could be of no consequence, either to the public, or their employers in their professions. The supporters of the petition argued on the advantages of extending religious toleration; and endeavoured to show, that the articles were in some parts contradictory, and in others totally indefensible. They enlarged on the principal topics set forth in the petition itself; and concluded with observing, that, on granting the requested relief, many of the dissenters, being no longer deterred by articles, would join the established church.

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By two classes was this petition opposed: the one consisted of the tory and high church gentleman, who considered the thirty-nine articles as the bulwark of the church of England, and of christianity itself. In the last century, the church, and with it the state, fell, through such innovations. Parliament, they contended, could not grant the desired relief, because it could not annul the obligations of an oath. The king could not comply with their petition, as he was bound by oath to preserve the established church; a compliance would also be a breach of the articles of union, as by them it was stipulated, that the ecclesiastical governments of Scotland and England should continue for ever unchanged. Writings of late had appeared, inimical to the most important articles, not only of the church of England, but of the christian faith: they had denied the doctrines of the trinity, and the divinity of our Saviour; and thus endeavoured to remove the corner stone of our religion: by granting the petition, therefore, we should admit unitarians and other heretics to be clergymen of the church of England.

is opposed
by one
class, on
grounds of
theological
belief;

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by another,
on political
expedi-
ency.

A GREATER number of members opposed the petition on political grounds.¹ They vindicated its advocates from the charge of heretical opinions; they maintained, that the legislature had still a control over the articles of union, and had exercised that control towards the two churches; in England, by an act against occasional conformity; and in Scotland, by an act annulling the popular election of clergymen. Every society, they observed, is competent to determine the qualifications of its members; all governments have a right to constitute the several orders of their subjects, to ascertain that the principles and characters of persons employed in any trust be such as will most effectually answer the purposes of those trusts. The office of public instructors of the people in virtue and religion, requires a careful examination of the capacity, dispositions, principles, and opinions of the persons proposing to officiate. The clergy being intended to teach the nation, it is expedient that there should be an uniformity of established doctrine, the chief tenets of which every clergymen should admit. Admissibility to the clerical, as well as to any other public office, is a question of expediency; and this is no hardship: a candidate has the alternative, of refusing either the employment, or subscription. Physicians and civilians are in the same predicament, required to subscribe certain articles, or not to become members of an English university. It is found expedient that there should be a national church for the preservation and promotion of christianity, and for the welfare of society. These articles are considered by the legislature as conducive to the purposes in view; therefore law givers ought to require the admission of them in the holders of employments which are connected with the objects of that national church. On these strong and comprehensive grounds of equitable policy, many enlightened senators, who were not votaries of the high church doctrines, joined in defending our ecclesiastical establishment against innovation. The majority against the petition was two hundred and seventeen to seventy-one.

IN the course of the debates, not a few of the opposers of the petition had expressed an opinion, that though

¹ Parliamentary Debates, 1772.

It was just and reasonable to require subscription from persons proposing to be clergymen in the established church, and to derive profit from the priesthood, it was hard to oblige dissenting ministers to subscribe the *doctrinal* articles of the church, from which they sought neither promotion nor emolument. By the act of toleration, dissenters were allowed to exercise divine worship according to their own sentiments, if their ministers subscribed all the articles of the church except those which relate to discipline. When that act was passed, dissenters were as warmly attached to the Calvinistic doctrines of the articles as churchmen themselves, and readily subscribed them as required by law. During the last two reigns, it had appeared that Arianism and Socinianism became very prevalent; few of the dissenters for many years had subscribed the articles, and thus were liable to penalties, though from the liberality of the age, and the lenient government of the house of Brunswick, these were very rarely inflicted.

SIR HENRY HOUGHTON made a motion to relieve the dissenters from subscriptions and the penal laws, but was warmly opposed by the high church gentlemen. The dissenters, it was said, by omitting to subscribe, had violated the law of the land; and the transgressors, not satisfied with being excused, desired the law to be changed in order to accommodate a change in their opinions. A total exemption from subscription would open the way to heresy and infidelity. The dissenters were a respectable body, and a certain regard was due to their opinions; but the present bill, instead of proposing the mere relief of nonconformists, was a project for encouraging schism, and ultimately destroying the church of England; many of the dissenters now maintained doctrines totally different from those of former times, and were inimical to the church of England, to the protestant religion, and to true christianity: to encourage such men, therefore, would be equally contradictory to sound policy, and to the interests of the established faith. The supporters of the bill contended, that subscriptions, while they operate against the pious and conscientious, are no restraints on the impious and wicked. The secta-

Houghton's bill for the relief of dissenters,

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rians were charged with having deviated from the theological opinions of their predecessors; but in all ranks of a community advancing in knowledge and civilization, the more understandings were exercised, the greater would be the diversity in the result of different efforts. That some individual dissenters held principles inimical to christianity, might be true; but the charge against them as a body, was totally false: they had been uniformly the friends of civil and religious liberty, had supported the British constitution, the establishment of the house of Brunswick, and all those principles and measures by which our constitutional rights were upheld: they had moreover supported the christian faith against its most ardent impugnors; and such men certainly deserved to enjoy something more than mere impunity by connivance. By toleration, christianity had flourished; by intolerance, the number of believers had been lessened:^m let protestants be united, that we may be the better able to make head against infidels. These considerations induced a great majority in the house of commons to vote for the bill; but in the house of lords the bishops exerted themselves so strenuously against an indulgence which they conceived and represented to be dangerous to the church, that the bill was rejected by no less than a hundred and two to twenty-nine.

passes the
commons,

but is
thrown
out by the
lords.

Clerical
nullum
tempus
bill,

DURING this session also, another bill was proposed on an ecclesiastical subject, entitled the church *nullum tempus* bill; the object of which was analogous to the purpose of the crown *nullum tempus* law, to secure land possessors against dormant claims of the church. On the part of the church it was answered, that the power of reviving claims was necessary to prevent the laity from affecting those encroachments which they were always desirous of making upon the clergy. The proposed bill would be peculiarly injurious to the poor clergy, whom great land holders, and combinations of rich farmers were very much disposed to oppress. The supporters of the bill replied, that its provisions guarded against the alleged inconveniences; and they defied its opponents to prove that the laity did oppress the clergy. Min-

^m Burke's speech on sir Henry Houghton's motion. Parliamentary Debates, 1772.

isters, desirous of gratifying the hierarchy, were very inimical to a bill which tended to abridge clerical power. To independent members, however, it appeared so reasonable, that notwithstanding the influence of administration, the majority by which it was negatived was very inconsiderable.

WHILE parliament was occupied in examining the extent and boundaries of religious indulgence, and admitting the equity and wisdom of liberal toleration prevented it from intrenching on the establishment, a subject was submitted to their deliberation, which involved the most important duties of morality, and the closest ties of civil society: this was a bill for restraining the royal family in the momentous engagement of marriage; the proposition of which arose from the following incidents. The duke of Gloucester had espoused the countess dowager of Waldegrave; and the duke of Cumberland, Mrs. Horton, a widow, and daughter to lord Irnham. These marriages, which had been concluded clandestinely, gave great dissatisfaction at court. On the 28th of February, the king sent a message to both houses of parliament, importing, that his majesty thought it would be wise and expedient in parliament to render effectual the right which had always belonged to the kings of this realm, of approving all marriages of the royal family, to supply the defects of the law now in being; and, by some new provision, more effectually to guard descendants of his late majesty (excepting the issue of princesses affianced into foreign families) from marrying without the approbation of his majesty, his heirs, or successors. In consequence of this message, a bill was brought into the house of lords for rendering all the descendants of George II. (with the exception above mentioned) incapable of contracting marriage without the consent of the king, or his successors on the throne, signified under the great seal, and declared in council. There was in the bill, however, one deviation from the tenor of the royal message; for if such descendant, after passing the age of twenty-five years, gave the privy council twelve months previous notice of his intended marriage, unless both houses of parliament within that time declared their disapprobation, it

Law for
restricting
the marriage of the
royal family.

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1772.

Argu-
ments
against it;

might be valid without the royal consent. The bill was strongly opposed by both houses, on grounds of law, policy, and morality. It was denied that the power declared in the preamble to have belonged to the king, actually did constitute part of the royal prerogative in the extent now claimed; as a fact, it was not to be found in our history^a; nor as law, in our statutes, precedents, or the opinions of our judges. The declaration of law was, besides, either useless or hurtful: if intended to have no retrospective operation, it was frivolous and unnecessary; if designed as a retrospect, it was iniquitous. The descendants of George II. might in time comprehend great numbers who were dispersed among the various ranks of civil life; and thus many families would, in their most important engagements, become dependent on the crown. The time of nonage too, was by this law lengthened beyond just limits; it was disrespectful to the royal offspring to suppose that they did not arrive at intellectual maturity so soon as other subjects; and it was farther absurd, that when at eighteen a prince or princess was deemed qualified to govern a kingdom, they should not till twenty-six be fit to contract a marriage. The discretionary power, wherever vested, of prohibiting any marriage, was a violation of the inherent rights of human nature, founded on the strongest propensity implanted in man for the best of purposes. No legislature was competent to the annihilation of this right. It had, moreover, a natural tendency to rouse a disputed title to the crown; for, should those who might be affected by it be in power, they would procure a repeal of the act, and consequently produce a contest with the next heir under that law; should they not be in power, they would still excite compassion and indignation among those who must think them aggrieved by such a restriction, and hence dissension and civil war would ensue. The prohibition was also contrary to morality; for, as far as it reached, it was calculated to promote debauchery, seduction, and other vices, which marriage tended to prevent. Depriving those personages of

^a The instances adduced by the supporters of the bill did not prove the assertion of a legal right in the king to interfere in the marriage of his relations, they showed only the influence of the sovereign's authority, which inclination or prudence induced his family to regard.

the highest blessings of life, partners of their own approbation and choice, it drove them, in the unavoidable course of human passion, to illicit connexions, to concubinage, to promiscuous intercourse; and if it did not justify, at least palliated, in individuals so restricted, deviations from strict and rigorous virtue, much more than in any other subject not so circumscribed.^a

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By the supporters of the bill it was argued, from a variety of cases, that the kings of England always possessed the power now declared. Ten judges had, in 1717, delivered an opinion, which admitted the king's right to direct the marriage and education of the royal family. The judges, when consulted concerning the present bill, had determined, that the power claimed belonged to the king, as far as respected the marriages of his children, grandchildren (unless the issue of foreign families), and the presumptive heir of the crown. It was farther observed, that the dishonour reflected on the crown by improper alliances, and the evils experienced formerly by the nation from the intermarriage of the royal family with subjects, rendered it necessary to guard in future against either derogatory or dangerous connexions. The sovereign is the natural guardian and judge of the honour, dignity, and conduct of his family. The subjects of the bill might in time greatly increase in number, yet it was not to be supposed that the sovereign, in the multiplicity of momentous affairs, would interfere beyond his near relations, or other probable heirs; but should future inconveniences, not now foreseen, arise from the bill, the legislature was always competent to apply a remedy. The bill was passed by a considerable majority; and from this time no marriage concluded by a descendant of George II. under twenty-six years of age, without the consent of the king, or of both houses of parliament after that age, is lawful. Whether the law be wise or unwise, is another question; but the fact is, that without compliance with this statute, no person so circumstanced can be lawfully married, nor have legitimate offspring.

arguments for it;

is passed.

^a Parliamentary debates, 1772.

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1772.

East India
affairs.

THE attention of parliament was also called this session to East India affairs. It was generally acknowledged, that great abuses prevailed in the administration of the company's possessions; but the extent of the evils was not hitherto ascertained in either house. The company was aware of the very flagrant delinquency that existed among its servants, but was desirous of retaining in itself the means of correction and future prevention. The directors were far from wishing the interference of government, and much alarmed by the doctrines that had been advanced concerning their territorial possessions; knowing too, that the misconduct of their servants, afforded to government and to the legislature very strong reasons for taking an active concern in the territorial administration of British India, they were very desirous of making it appear that they were themselves competent to the task. Admitting the abuses by their servants, they pretended to have discovered the causes, and proposed, by removing them to apply effectual remedies. They had, they said, hitherto allowed too much power to their servants, and now proposed to reduce executorial authority, and to extend their own. For this purpose, Mr. Sullivan, the deputy chairman, proposed in the house of commons a bill for the better regulation of the company's servants and affairs in India, by restraining the governor and council from every species of trade, entirely changing the court of judicature and mode of administering justice in Bengal, and restricting the power of the executive servants. In supporting his motion, he severely attacked lord Clive, as the principal transgressor. Lord Clive, defending himself and retorting on the company, imputed the chief abuses to their misconduct and violence: reciprocal recrimination produced from both very minute and copious details, which confirmed other members in their opinion that there existed flagrant delinquency. Ministers, without discussing the charges of either party, expressed their fears that the evils were too deep and extensive for the bill to remedy; and it would, they said, be premature to form any plan of correction and prevention, before inquiry should be made as to the actual state of affairs. The bill was rejected: a select committee of thirty-one was soon

after appointed to inquire into the nature and state of affairs in India ; and this committee found the subject of their inquiries so very extensive and complicated, that they asked and obtained leave to sit during the recess.

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On the 1st of May, lord North entered on the business of ways and means : and showed that, after providing for the service of the current year, the nation, without fresh taxes, was able to pay off two millions and a half of three per cent. annuities, then at ninety : he also enlarged on the prospect of peace, which he said might be reasonably expected to last ten years, and would liquidate a considerable part of our debts. Besides, even should peace be broken, *lord North professed himself such an economist, as to be able to carry on war without the addition of new taxes.* The house was pleased with the flattering picture, and the minister acquired great credit with parliament and the country for his financial ability. As the English are by no means averse from war, many were delighted with the notion that they were blessed in lord North with a statesman who could beat their enemies without troubling them for farther contributions. In his plan of reducing the national debt, they anticipated the reduction of their present taxes, and he now by fair promises began to acquire considerable popularity and reputation ; but the chief foundation of lord North's fame at this time was his *economy*.

Supplies.

A session, which, by its moderation, afforded a striking contrast to the preceding years of the present parliament, ended on the 9th of June. During this session on the 8th of February, died the princess dowager of Wales. Her royal highness was of an amiable private character, and had long been highly esteemed and beloved by the British nation. During the latter part of her life, the sentiments of many persons had been changed, from surmises that rested on no certain grounds. When our present sovereign ascended the throne, it was alleged that, possessing great influence with a son of the warmest filial affection, she interfered in public affairs, and held the chief direction of the secret cabinet, which, according to

Session rises.

Death of the princess dowager of Wales.

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X.

1772.

the political hypothesis of popular speakers and writers, commanded all the ostensible ministers. A precise and definite motive was assigned for the supposed efforts of this imputed influence; the opposition to Mr. Pitt in the council; the dismissal of the whig party; the peace; the prosecution of Wilkes; the taxation of America; the Middlesex election; and the promotion of the Scotch: in short, every act disagreeable to the people of England was ascribed to a secret power flowing from the princess and a junto of her favourites. Though this theory was very generally received, yet an authentic historian, having neither oral nor written testimony, cannot record as a fact the existence of such an influence. It is, however, his duty to mention such generally believed rumours or conjectures, as have a great influence on the period concerning which he writes. That such a report and apprehension greatly influenced the popular notions of the first ten years of the reign, is very evident; but that neither the votaries of the opinion nor the spreaders of the rumour have adduced evidence to confirm the truth of their assertion, is equally certain. Having therefore *no proof of the fact*, I cannot, consistently with sound philosophy, assign this influence as the CAUSE of the many evils which have been so often ascribed to it both in and out of parliament. In estimating the character of the princess dowager, I cannot therefore allow weight to her alleged interference in public affairs. Her highness was eminent for her private virtues in the various relations of life: as a wife, a mother, a mistress of a family, an exalted member of society, her conduct bore the manifest marks of benevolence and propriety; and in none of her sentiments or actions did she give the slightest indication of her being actuated by the dispositions which are assumed by political partisans.

Operations
between
Russia and
Turkey. 1771.

THIS year war was replete with important events on the continent of Europe. The Russians, in the campaign of 1771, although ultimately successful on the Danube, did not obtain such signal advantages in that quarter, as were expected from their progress in the two former years. In Crim Tartary they were decisively victorious, and reduced the whole peninsula, and in the Mediterranean they

annihilated the commerce of Turkey. Negotiations were renewed in winter under the mediation of the courts of Berlin and Vienna, but were not brought to the desired conclusion. The Austrians were jealous of the progress of the Russians, both in Turkey and in Poland. They protected the confederates as far as they could, without openly manifesting hostility to Russia, or giving umbrage to Frederic. At length, Maria Teresa made claim to the Polish district of Zips, on the frontiers of Hungary, and in autumn 1771 invaded it with a powerful force. The empress of Russia, enraged at the invasion of Poland, said to prince Henry of Prussia, who was then at her court, *If Vienna attempt to dismember Poland, neighbouring states must imitate her example.* This observation perfectly accorded with Frederic's ideas. His troops had that very year entered Poland, under a pretence of forming a cordon, to prevent the infection of the plague from spreading to his dominions; and his army had afterwards advanced, on the pretext of relieving the inhabitants from the oppressions of the confederates. By Frederic's orders, his soldiers had for these services exacted enormous contributions from Polish Prussia, and especially from the city of Dantzic; and this plunder of communities at peace with Frederic, was sent to his treasury. The present overture was only a proposal for another robbery on a larger scale. Frederic lost no time in inquiring whether Catharine was sincere; and being assured that she was serious, he drew up a plan of dividing Poland between the three powers; very skilfully and considerably partitioning the territories, so as to give each of the partners the share respectively most contiguous and convenient. This participation he concerted with Catharine, before he communicated the project to Austria. Russia was to have all that territory which extends on the eastern side of the Druce and the Dwina, from the gulf of Riga to the Ukraine; Austria was to have the offer of Ludomeria and Galicia, on the confines of Hungary; while the king of Prussia, for his share, was to receive Pomerellia; which besides other advantages, joined together Pomerania and Prussia, and thus, instead of two detached, gave him three compact provinces. Having settled this plan

Scheme of Frederic and Catharine for partitioning Poland.

Offer Austria a share.

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She objects to the inequality of the division.

Her scruples are vanquished by a larger distribution.

with Russia, Frederic next proposed it to the imperial minister; thinking it so advantageous, that it would certainly be accepted. Prince Kaunitz, the Austrian minister at first made strong objections to the division, BECAUSE^q it would be next to impossible to agree on terms of perfect equality. In an affair of such a nature, as Frederic observed,^r *it was no time to be discouraged by trifles*. Catharine and he therefore intimated an alternative to Austria, if she would not agree to the division, they would go to war with her, without allowing her any share; but if she would become a willing party, a larger seizure of Poland should be made, to suit *her ideas of equality*. Austria at last consented; a treaty was concluded, and each of the three acquired a greater portion than was originally intended. Having thus on friendly terms arranged the seizure of territories belonging to neither, they thought proper to intimate to the proprietors the proposed spoliation. A joint manifesto, drawn up by the three powers, set forth the troubles excited in Poland on almost every vacancy of the throne, and the friendly offices of the court of Petersburg in rectifying many abuses in the constitution of that republic. The court of Berlin claimed the credit of having seconded these generous acts; and Austria had chosen neutrality, as the means of promoting the active efforts of Catharine and Frederic. From the wise and benevolent policy of her beneficent neighbours, Poland had every prospect of prosperity, peace, and happiness; but a spirit of discord had counteracted these efforts, and to reestablish tranquillity in Poland, Russia, Austria, and Prussia found it necessary to place the ancient constitution of the kingdom, and the liberties of the people, on a sure and solid foundation. They had respectively considerable claims on the republic, which each would be ready to justify, in time and place, by authentic records and solid reasons. Meanwhile, having reciprocally communicated their several claims, and being mutually satisfied of their justice, they had determined to secure to themselves a proportionable equivalent, by

^q See the king of Prussia's Memoirs of himself; from which the greater part of our account of this partition is comprised.

^r See the Memoirs.

taking immediate and effectual possession of such parts of the territories of the republic, as might serve to fix more natural and sure bounds between her and the three powers.^s The confederate partitioners did actually specify their pretensions, but without adducing any proof. The court of Warsaw answered^t these denunciations by just and conclusive reasoning, founded on the plainest principle of jurisprudence, equity and moral rectitude; demonstrating from the law of nations and many particular treaties, the claims of the three powers to be totally unfounded, and their proceedings to be contrary to all lawful rights. Little availed the remonstrances of justice against determined ambition, aided by resistless force. The confederate powers commanded the Polish king and republic to assemble without delay a diet to ratify their claims.

THE king and senate applied to the courts of London, Versailles, Madrid, and the United Provinces, to interfere in their favour; but from the weakness, distance, or internal dissensions of these states, the applications were unavailing. Britain and France, indeed, remonstrated, but without effect. Deserted by the rest of mankind, and surrounded by powerful enemies, the Polish king and his council were necessitated to convoke a senate, in order to summon a diet for the purpose of formally authorizing usurpations which the force of the usurpers had before effectually confirmed. In the respective specifications of the partitioning powers, Austria was the most insolent, imperious, and full of threats; Catharine, the most moderate, plausible, and abounding in promises; and Frederic, the most learned, acute, and replete with ingenious pretexts.^u They now respectively prepared to take possession of their booty; and Frederic much more active than Austria, and less occupied than Russia, first secured his division, and added to the seizure, part of Dantzic, including the harbour and port duties; and afterwards the remainder, though it constituted no part of his pretended claim upon Poland.

Dismemberment of Poland.

THE influence of Frederic, however, was not confined to the scene of his power; for a revolution happened this year

Revolution in Sweden.

^s See State Papers, 1772.

^t Ibid.

^u See the respective manifestoes; State Papers, 1772.

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in Sweden, to which he greatly contributed. In early ages the Swedes, like most other hardy and gallant inhabitants of the north, were free. From the time of Gustavus Vasa, there had been a fluctuation of constitutions, in which the aristocracy, or the king, were alternately paramount, and the people enjoyed very little share of power. Under Charles XII., the government was despotic; but his sister and heir, Ulrica, was obliged to suffer the aristocratical domination to be reestablished; and Frederic and Adolphus were not able to triumph over the Swedish nobles. Adolphus dying in 1771, was succeeded by Gustavus, his eldest son by the sister of the Prussian king. Gustavus, on his accession to the throne, made the most ardent protestations of love for liberty; professed that he thought it the chief glory of a king to reign over a free people; subscribed the declaration of rights, and added articles for absolving his subjects from their allegiance if ever he should infringe the contract. At his coronation, he made a speech concluding with a prayer to God, *that ambition might not disturb the freedom and happiness of the state*. Notwithstanding his solemn oaths, however, this prince had concerted a project for becoming absolute. Aided by his two brothers, and trusty officers, he gained over the army to his interest; with the greatest art and success he courted popularity, while his emissaries no less actively rendered the people discontented with the senate and established government. He was assured of the support of his uncle; and indeed, both in the formation and execution of his plan, he displayed ability and vigour not unworthy of a nephew of Frederic. The scheme being ripe for execution, on the 19th of August Gustavus totally overturned the constitution, which less than three months before he had sworn to maintain, and engaged to support, as the indispensable condition of his admission to the regal office. Being master of all the military force at Stockholm, he surrounded the senate, and made the members prisoners. The diet was commanded to assemble; and, encompassed by fixed bayonets, the king ordered a new form of government to be read. The members, so situated, signed whatever was proposed, and took the oath which Gustavus himself dictated. He then drew a book of psalms from his pocket; and, taking off his

crowns, began to sing to the praise of God, the assembly joining this pious prince in his sacred music. He afterwards informed them, that he should in six years convene the assembly of the states.* Thus the year 1772 was an era of usurpation; by Gustavus in his own kingdom, and by his neighbours in the kingdom of another.

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X.

1772.

A change this year took place in Denmark, which, by affecting a British princess, strongly agitated and deeply interested the loyal and generous hearts of Britons. Christian, king of Denmark, was the son of Frederic V., by Louisa, daughter of George II. The queen died in early youth, and king Frederic afterwards married a German princess, by whom he had a son, named Frederic. This queen was a woman of great artifice and ambition. As her son was heir in default of his brother, the queen dowager had been averse from the marriage of the young king. Christian was a prince of very weak understanding, and sunk by habits of debauchery below his natural insignificance. Matilda, though not sixteen years of age when she arrived in Denmark, immediately manifested to Julia Maria, the queen dowager, an intelligence and sensibility, which, she did not doubt, must discern the incapacity, and feel the misconduct, of her husband. She therefore formed a project of sowing discord between the new married couple, which she trusted would end in a separation, and promote her views in favour of her son. For this purpose she played a double game; she employed her minions to ingratiate themselves with the king, and to encourage him in his vices; while she informed the queen of his defects, and, professing a great friendship, declared that every thing in her power should be done for his reformation. Meanwhile, the silly monarch persisted in his usual course; the queen dowager contrived to have a mistress thrown in his way, whom he kept openly in the palace. Matilda, possessing great sagacity, easily discovered both the designs and motives of the treacherous dowager. Anxious for the welfare of her infant prince, she, for the sake of the son, overlooked the folly of the father; and

State of
Denmark.

Incapacity
of the
king.

Character
and con-
duct of the
queen.

Artifices of
the queen
dowager.

* Mr. Charles Sheridan, British envoy at Sweden, published a very accurate account of this extraordinary revolution. Its heads are compressed above in the text.

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Struensee.

soon procured such influence, as to attain the chief direction of affairs, before possessed by the elder queen. The ambition of Julia was now stimulated by revenge, the gratification of which she at last accomplished. There was at the court of Copenhagen, a German, named Struensee, of some abilities, with that wide extent of superficial knowledge and those petty attainments which are so common in continental adventurers. He possessed also an insinuating address, and an agreeable person; but was profligate in his manners, and abandoned in his principles. Having studied some branches of medicine, he professed himself a physician; and having attended the king when he was experiencing the effects of vice, he acquired great favour with the sovereign, and in a short time made so rapid a progress, that, from being an itinerant empiric, he became minister of state. He also elevated Brandt, a fellow adventurer, and several others of his friends. Both Struensee and Brandt were raised to be earls; many of the chief grandees were disgraced; and most of them were disgusted with the upstart insolence of these ignoble favourites. The demeanour of Struensee also excited many and powerful enemies. As Matilda had then the superior power, Struensee joined her politics in opposition to those of the queen dowager; and thus added her to the number of his foes. Julia secretly insinuated that not a political connexion only subsisted between Struensee and the queen: and in 1771, when Matilda was delivered of a daughter, she, seeing the new-born princess, said with a malicious smile, that the child had all the features of Struensee. The evil report was industriously propagated; and it was farther asserted, that the ruling party had formed a design to supersede the king, to appoint Matilda regent during the minority of her son, and Struensee supreme director of affairs. The report of the intended deposition was never substantiated by any proof; and the other rumour, which was never seconded either by testimony or circumstantial evidence, must stand in history as a FALSE AND MALICIOUS SLANDER against the sister of the British sovereign. The queen finding herself an object of unjust suspicion, took a part very natural to conscious innocence, but often injurious to female reputation; she

disregarded the rumours, and did not abstain from the company of the suspected party. This conduct neither prudent nor judicious, greatly accelerated the success of her enemies. It was not difficult to spread scandal against the friend of a man so deservedly unpopular; and the charge was very generally believed. The king was easily impressed with the prevailing opinion, being a mere tool in the hands of any party that happened to predominate.

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On the 17th of January, the queen dowager and her son, coming at four in the morning to the king's bedchamber, asserted to him, that the queen and Struensee were at that very hour framing an act of renunciation of the crown, which they would compel him immediately to sign; and therefore that his only means of escaping this danger, was to sign orders which they had drawn up for the arrest of the queen and her accomplices. The king, though reluctant, at length complied, and the orders were immediately executed; but the queen being found in her own apartment, and Struensee and Brandt in bed in their respective houses, manifested the falsehood of Julia's charge. Having before secured the army and people, the dowager reigned without control. Struensee and Brandt were tried; but, culpable as they both might be, there was no evidence that they had perpetrated any capital crime; they were, however, sentenced to death, and executed. Respecting queen Matilda, the ruling party did not attempt to establish their charges. The dowager was unwilling to establish a precedent for trying a queen by subjects; and besides, though by subornation and iniquity she might easily have crushed an unprotected individual however innocent, yet to put to an undeserved death the sister of the king of England, would be a very dangerous act of tyranny. His Britannic majesty, knowing that it would be in vain to attempt the vindication of his sister's character in a country governed by her inveterate enemies, resolved to rescue her from those malignant calumniators, and sent a SQUADRON to demand the unfortunate princess. The court of Denmark, not choosing to refuse a requisition so seconded, delivered her to commo-

Accusa-
tion and
arrest of
Matilda.

His Britan-
nic majesty
demands
and rescues
his suffer-
ing sister,

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and affords
her an
asylum in
his Ger-
man do-
minion.

dore Macbride, who conveyed her from the scene of her persecution to Zell, a city in the dominions of Hanover, where her royal brother had provided her an asylum, in which she resided during the remainder of her short life.⁷

y She died May 10th, 1775, of a malignant fever, in her 24th year.

CHAP. XI.

America, tranquil in the south, is turbulent in the north.—Massachusetts disavows the authorities of the British constitution.—Britain.—Mercantile failures of 1772.—Alexander Fordyce.—Change of mercantile character.—Influence of accumulation in India.—Stockjobbing fictitious credit—extravagant adventure without capital.—High estimation of lord North for financial skill.—Affairs of the India company—its pecuniary embarrassments—conduct of its servants, and distresses of the natives—reported to the house of commons by a committee.—The company propose a scheme for correcting and restraining its servants.—Parliament undertakes the task.—Company's petition for a loan—granted on certain conditions.—Company allowed to export tea from Britain duty free.—Lord North's plan for the government of India—discussed in parliament—passes into a law.—Inquiry into the conduct of lord Clive.—Distinguished abilities of Messrs. Thurlow and Wedderburne shown against and for lord Clive.—The war with the Caribs.—Increase of halfpay to naval captains.—Petition of the dissenters—is rejected.—Supplies.—Reduction of the national debt.—Continental affairs.—Completion of the dismemberment of Poland.—Violent attacks of Roman catholic powers on their clergy.—America—tranquillity, and flourishing commerce.—Britain—discontent and licentiousness subside.—Increasing trade and prosperity imputed to the policy of lord North.—The minister now at the zenith of his fame.

TRANQUILLITY continued to prevail in the middle and southern colonies of America; but in the northern, the democratical spirit was daily gaining ground. The salaries of the provincial judges, and the attorney and solicitor general, paid by the assemblies, were very scanty. To render men in such important situations more inde-

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America,
tranquil in
the south,
is turbulent
in the
north.

Massachu-
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of the Bri-
tish consti-
tution.

Britain ;
mercantile
failures of
1772.

Alexander
Fordyce.

pendent in their circumstances, government had this year assigned them liberal salaries out of the American revenue. The New Englanders affected to believe that this arrangement was intended to corrupt the source of justice, and render decisions dependent on government. A meeting of Bostonians called by themselves the *select men*, on the 25th of October petitioned government to hold an assembly for the purpose of considering the evil tendency of the new regulations. The governor not complying, the committee issued a new declaration of rights, more republican than any that had yet been published ; which considered the provincials merely as free men, not as British subjects, and denied the right of the British parliament to legislate in any case for the colonies. A general meeting of Bostonians ; immediately adopted this declaration of their committee the provincial assembly published their approbation of the doctrines in their most democratical extent : and the proceedings of all classes and orders in Massachusetts amounting to a disavowal of the established authorities of the British constitution. Republican turbulence in the north, and tranquil acquiescence in constitutional authority through the middle and southern colonies, strongly manifested a diversity of sentiment, which it was the duty of legislative wisdom to consider, in its policy towards the respective provinces.

In Britain, this year was remarkable for very great and numerous bankruptcies, important in themselves, but more momentous as they demonstrated the close and complex connexions and intermingled dependencies of commercial credit, and also marked a change that had taken place in the mercantile character. A Scotch adventurer, named Alexander Fordyce, had risen in a few years to such a height in the city of London, that his downfall appeared for a time to shake all credit and confidence throughout the metropolis. Fordyce was a projector, who possessed ingenuity to form plausible schemes, insinuating manners, and dextrous address to engage confidence, but without sound judgment and prudence to direct his conduct. He had gambled in the funds to a very great amount ; and having at times succeeded by his occasional command of ready money, and by becoming a partner in a very eminent banking-house, he was intrusted

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with many and large sums belonging to others. He now dealt in stockjobbing to an extent unknown in the annals of gambling. At length the bubble burst: he failed to an amount little short of half a million, and involved his partners in his ruin; and many others, who had trusted him with money or bills, shared the same fate. The fall of so great a house carried its effects far beyond immediate creditors, excited a distrust of other banking and mercantile firms, and, obstructing the usual accommodation, produced many stoppages. But these evils, occasioned in a considerable degree by Fordyce and his connexions, originated in causes much more general, which influenced the conduct and determined the fortune of many others.

The gains of British merchants in former times were chiefly from the gradual operation of skill, industry, economy, and bold yet prudent adventure. The riches acquired were rarely amassed but by a long and persevering attention to trade; moderate wealth was the progressive effect of certain intellectual and moral qualities, skilfully and steadily exerted for a long course of years, forming and determining the character, while they filled the coffers. By the vast acquisitions in India, immense fortunes had been accumulated almost instantaneously: adventurers of very limited merit in three or four years had returned with ten times the wealth that able, prosperous, and eminent merchants were able to collect by the efforts of a long and industrious life. The view of such astonishing acquisitions dazzled many traders, and instead of submitting patiently to former modes of commercial process, they would become opulent by compendious means: with this intent, they engaged in hazardous adventures in the funds,^z monopolies, and various other objects. Not having actual property for carrying on such extensive plans, they were obliged to proceed upon trust; and as men of real wealth were not the most likely to risk their money on doubtful schemes, combinations of indigent adventurers were formed for maintaining a fictitious credit by interchange of bills. Some of these actually succeeded in

Change of
the mercantile
character.Influence
of accumulations in
India.Stock-
jobbing.

^z Though stockjobbing had prevailed ever since the establishment of the national debt, the great fluctuation of India stock about this time afforded more scope than usual for this species of gambling.

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Pictitious
credit.Extrava-
gant ad-
venture
without
capital.

acquiring a capital; others kept themselves so long afloat, as to impress the world with an opinion of their ultimate responsibility, and thus found means to involve wealthy men in their projects. From the eastern accumulations and manners, came also an enormous increase of luxury; this evil did not so readily affect the substantial merchant, who in making his fortune had formed his habits to frugality and moderation, as the visionary and needy projector, whose fancy anticipated immense profits, and whose actual possessions could not possibly suffer the smallest loss. The failures of this year were chiefly imputable to extravagant projects in trade, stockjobbing, and enormous paper credit without capital mutually acting and reacting, severally and jointly the effects and causes of luxury and profusion. These disasters, springing from unwarrantable adventure, extended their consequences to men totally unconcerned in such wild and destructive schemes. Bankers, in particular, were a class of traders, who, from the nature of their business, had many customers, among persons requiring much accommodation by discount, and some of these sustained very great losses. The bank, in a state of general distrust, having refused the usual discounts, men of considerable property were embarrassed, as they could not raise money to discharge engagements formed on the faith of customary accommodation, and for several months trade was stagnant. Although many of the commercial sufferers were distressed, not from want of property, but the stoppage of its usual convertibility, no measures were proposed by ministers for supporting the mercantile credit of persons, who, by temporary assistance, might have been preserved from ruin. Greedily, however, as these insolvencies obstructed trade at the time, they did not prove ultimately injurious; for, by inculcating caution and reserve, they rendered credit more discriminate, and discouraged the desperate schemes of gamblers, and other unprincipled or infatuated speculators. This beneficial effect, however, they owed to the natural course of commercial confidence, without any aid from the policy of administration.

Lord North had now acquired a stability and power, much greater than any of his predecessors since the resig-

nation of Mr. Pitt. In the ministry there was none of that distraction of counsels, which contributed so much to the inefficiency of former administrations. The first lord of the treasury excelled most members in parliamentary eloquence, and he had already acquired great reputation for financial skill. From the return of tranquillity to the greater part of America, and the diminution of licentiousness at home, his political talents were generally respected. The opponents of government, though still paramount in genius and eloquence, were very much diminished in number, and less severe and vehement against a minister whom they could not help thinking well qualified for his office, and throughout the nation lord North was become the object of esteem and confidence.

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High estimation of lord North for commercial skill.

THE subject about to occupy chiefly the ensuing session of parliament was the affairs of India, in the investigation of which a committee of the house was employed during the summer. Though the concerns of the company had been brought under the cognizance of parliament so early as 1767, no measures of correction and regulation had been adopted, except to rescind their acts, restrict their dividends, and obtain from them an annual sum of money on stipulated conditions. Inquiry and investigation now afforded abundant proof, that a comprehensive and radical reform was indispensably necessary to the interests of the company, the honour of England, the welfare and even existence of the natives, and the salvation of British India.

Affairs of the India company.

AN immense accession of territory had unavoidably compelled the company to repose very great trust in their servants, and this confidence had been most grossly and flagrantly abused. The company's officers were guilty of complicated and extensive malversation; their ambition and extravagance had involved their employers in unnecessary and enormous expenses; and their extortion, peculation, and iniquity, made a considerable diminution in the income of their masters. To enter on a particular detail of the multifarious means which were employed by the company's servants for defrauding and plundering the natives of India, would far exceed our limits; but a short sketch of the character, system, and leading consequences

Its pecuniary embarrassments.

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Conduct
of its ser-
vants,

of the speculation is a necessary part of our history, as a momentous fact belonging to our subject, marking the principle, spirit and operation of British avarice in India, and ascertaining the necessity for a control to restrain and prevent such flagrant and destructive wickedness. It was before observed, that the plunder of India was conducted by our countrymen according to mercantile modes, and this remark our present account will farther illustrate. The chief servants of the company made it their first business to inform themselves of the most valuable and marketable commodities in the provinces which they were employed to govern, for the benefit of their masters; they found that salt, betel, and tobacco, were the most productive merchandises; and, accordingly, they very deliberately formed what they called a commercial association for inland traffic in those articles. The principle of the copartnership was very simple, being only that the said associators, namely the council of Calcutta, its friends and favourites, should have the sole power of buying and selling those commodities. Thus did servants, without any authority from their masters, who had indeed no right to grant such power, establish by their own will, and for their own benefit, a monopoly of the absolute necessities of life, throughout three large, populous, and opulent provinces. Having no competitors, they bought and sold at their own price: impoverishing the people, they rendered them unable to pay the stated exactions of the company; and thus, in robbing the natives, they defrauded their own employers. Not satisfied, however, with commercial pillage, they turned their views also to territorial estates. The zemindars, or landed proprietors, held their possessions on leases, the validity of which had never been doubted, more than any other legal security for property. The company's servants, however, destroyed this right, deprived the proprietors of their lands, sold them to the highest bidders, and shared the profits among themselves, according to their respective rank and influence in this combination of rapine. The landholders, deprived of the secure expectation of reaping the fruit, neglected to cultivate the soil; a large proportion of land was left untilled, and the consequence was a scarcity of food. The oppressed Indi-

ans, unable to procure rice, tried to subsist on roots; but many of these proving unwholesome, pestilence accompanied famine: the waters of the Ganges were infected by the number of carcasses which they daily received, and the putrid effluvia increased the mortality. The insatiate avarice of Britons thus spread desolation over India: the same iniquity which beggared the people, impoverished the company; and vast sums were spent in lucrative jobs, of no use to the establishment. There was, indeed, among the company's servants, one predominant object, to amass money by every means, however iniquitous and destructive; but the most efficacious expedients of avarice were fraud and breach of trust to their employers, devastation of the possessions which they were hired to improve, and plunder of the natives whom they were paid to govern.^a With such servants, the company, instead of becoming opulent, were deeply embarrassed; they had borrowed large sums of the bank, and requested the assistance of government to liquidate their debts. Such was the essence of the report prepared by the committee, and delivered to parliament, which met on the 26th of November. It farther appeared, that their distresses had been increased by accepting bills from their unprincipled servants, who thus procured the responsibility of their masters for engagements by which the servants only were benefited. The misconduct of the company's officers, with all its consequences, was manifestly imputable to the want of an efficient control, proportionate to the vast powers with which they were necessarily intrusted. In the present situation of affairs, therefore, it was the business of the legislature to establish a control, which, leaving to servants every power necessary for the objects of their employment, should only restrain malversation. The minister, admitting the abuses of the servants and the embarrassed state of the company's affairs, declared that the evils might be removed by wise and vigorous management. The company were themselves preparing to send out supervisors, to direct and reform their servants; but such efforts would, in his opinion, be inadequate to the

is reported
by a com-
mittee to
the house
of com-
mons.

^a This statement is compressed from the report of the select committee, delivered to the house in November 1772.

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The company proposes a scheme for correcting and restraining its servants.

Parliament undertakes the task.

Bill for preventing the company from sending supervisors to India,

exigencies of affairs. Before he himself introduced a plan of regulation, he proposed a secret committee, which should find out every thing necessary to be known, without exposing any facts of which the publication would be injurious. The committee reported, that the company, though much distressed in their pecuniary concerns, were preparing to send out a commission of supervision, the expense of which would heavily add to their difficulties; and recommended a bill to prevent them from pursuing their intention: a second report presented a statement of the effects, debts, and credits, of the company at home and abroad. On the reports of this secret committee, together with those of the select committee, lord North formed a plan respecting India, which consisted of three successive bills, and the discussion occupied the principal consideration of parliament in the present session. The first bill was framed to prevent the company from employing the intended means for the correction of abuses in India, and was preparatory to the interference of the British government in the administration of that country; the second proposed to relieve the company from its present embarrassments, by a loan; and the third, to establish regulations for the better management of the affairs of the company, as well in India as in Europe. The first bill was opposed, as an invasion of the company's charter, and of the right which every British subject, or body of subjects, possesses, of managing their own affairs. The company's situation, it was contended, was not so distressed as to be irretrievable by its own efforts and counsels. In the progress of the bill, petitions and counsels from Indian proprietors maintained the same doctrine. Ministers and the other supporters of the bill declared, that they intended the good of the company, as well as the security of the public. The proposing a very expensive commission at a time when the company was already in arrears to government, and so distressed as to be applying for a loan, was a very impolitic measure; it was therefore the duty of parliament to prevent them from being involved in utter ruin. Beside the unsuitableness of such an establishment to their circumstances, it was totally inadequate to the proposed object. The malversations in India were too

great for any efforts of the court of directors to correct ; the power of government only could be capable of curbing rapacity and violence, restoring to the inhabitants the secure enjoyment of their property, and directing the revenue into its proper channels. A great majority of both houses voted for the law.

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is passed
into a
law, 1773.

DURING the progress of this business, the company petitioned parliament for a loan, in the manner and on the terms specified in several propositions which had been presented to the house. They asked for one million five hundred thousand pounds for four years, at four per cent., to be repaid by instalments ; and engaged that the dividends of the company should not exceed six per cent. until half the sum was liquidated, after which they might raise their dividend to eight per cent. When the whole loan was discharged, the net profits beyond eight per cent. should be applied to the payment of the company's bond debt, until it was reduced to 1,500,000*l.* and after that reduction the surplus should be divided between the public and the company. They farther requested, that they might be discharged, during the remainder of the five years^b, from the four hundred thousand pounds, and might have leave to export their teas, free of duty, to America and foreign countries. Lord North, admitting the policy of relieving them, proposed, that one million four hundred thousand pounds should be lent to the company, and that their dividends should be limited to six per cent. until the repayment of the loan, and afterwards to seven per cent. until their bond debt should be reduced to 1,500,000*l.* Respecting the participation of profits the minister proposed, that the surplus profits, above the sum of eight per cent. should pay three-fourths to the treasury, and the remainder be applied to the farther reduction of the bond debt, or to discharge future contingences of the company. In the course of these discussions, the minister contended, that the state had a right to territorial possessions acquired through conquest by any of its subjects. Opposition argued, that lands acquired without the interference of the state, by a company exercising the corporate rights which they had purchased from the state, could no more belong to Great Britain, than the

Company
petitions
parliament
for a loan,

which is
granted on
certain
conditions.

^b See the parliamentary transactions of 1769, in this volume, p. 380.

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advantages of any other contract could belong to the grantee after he had made the convention for specified value. The minister persevered in asserting the right of the state to the territorial possessions in India, but thought it better to wave that question for six years longer, soon after which period the charter would expire. Those who either wished to oppose ministry, or to support the pretensions of the India company, chose to consider the state and company as two independent parties discussing a question of property according to the law of England. The minister took a different view: he looked on the East India company as a body which had been incorporated for a certain purpose, but was now placed in a situation totally different from the intent of its charters, and as protected in its commercial possession by those charters; but that its territorial acquisitions constituted no part of the corporation's rights; and became a question of policy, to be determined on the general principles of wisdom and prudence, and not of law, to be decided by courts or judicature.

The company is allowed to export tea from Britain, duty free.

Lord North's plan for the government of India.

IN conformity to that part of the company's petition which respected the export of tea, the minister proposed, that they should be allowed to send it without paying customs wherever they could find a market. One cause of their diminished return was, the rejection of that commodity by the colonies: they had 17,000,000 lbs. on hand which, by being enabled to sell at a reduced price, they hoped they could dispose of both in Europe and America. Lord North further intended, by thus offering the article to the Americans at a low price, to tempt them to purchase it in great quantities; and thus, besides benefiting the company, to add to the impost revenue from the colonies. This part of his plan led eventually to more important consequences, than any of his whole system for regulating the affairs of the India company.

THE minister proceeded to propose a third bill for the better management of the company's affairs; containing the first plan framed in the British legislature for governing British India. The scheme was, that the court of directors should be elected for four years; six members annually, but no one to continue in the direction longer than the four years; that none should vote at the election

of a director, who had not been a proprietor twelve months; that the qualification of a voter should, instead of five hundred pounds India stock, be a thousand; that the mayor's court of Calcutta should be confined to small mercantile cases; that a new court should be established, consisting of a chief justice and three puisne judges, who were to be appointed by the crown, and a superiority was to be given to the presidency of Bengal over the other establishments of India. In support of this bill ministers alleged, that the present brief period of their continuance in office left the directors no leisure to form and execute projects of permanent advantage; that six months was too short a term for holding stock as a qualification to vote, as it did not preclude temporary purchases for that purpose; and that 500*l.* was not a sufficient interest in the company, to entitle a proprietor to a vote, in its present extensive concerns. The mayor's court, composed of merchants and traders, though competent to its juridical purpose before the territorial acquisitions, when the matters submitted to its decision were solely commercial, was now totally inadequate to the exercise of the supreme judicature, and therefore a new court was proposed. The minister did not profess to expect that these regulations would completely produce the desired effect; yet he trusted that they would operate powerfully towards a general reform, and that the future vigilance of the legislature, instructed by experience, would provide new regulations, suitable to the state of the various and complicated concerns. The bill was long and vigorously opposed in parliament, and strongly deprecated by India proprietors; not only by the holders under a thousand pounds stock, who asserted that the franchise which they had purchased was confiscated without delinquency; but by others, who apprehended that thereby the property of India stock would decrease in value, as so strong a motive to purchase, or retain, was withdrawn: however, at length it passed into a law. The committees, beside collecting information to guide and induce deliberative amendment, found in the conduct of some of the company's principal servants, grounds for very severe judicial inquiries. A direct charge was adduced against those who had been principally concerned in the deposition of Surajah

is discussed
 and debated in parliament,

and passed into a law.

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Inquiry
into the
conduct of
Lord Clive.

Dowla. General Burgoyne, chairman of the select committee, having enumerated the distresses of India, and the acts from which, according to the committee, they arose, declared that he would prosecute the chief delinquents; he therefore moved "that the right honorable Robert lord Clive, baron Plassey in the kingdom of Ireland, in consequence of the powers vested in him in India, had illegally acquired the sum of 234,000*l.* to the dishonour and detriment of the state.

THE arguments to support this charge, were taken from the result of the various inquiries, a great part of which consisted of answers to interrogatories, put to the accused himself, and other principal actors. Lord Clive was stated to be the oldest, if not the chief delinquent, and to have set an evil example to all the rest; unless he were punished, therefore, every other offender might equitably expect indemnity. Lord Clive made a very ingenious and dexterous defence; and with much art having avoided a close discussion of the question on its own ground of right or wrong, he pleaded the thanks of the directors and proprietors on his return home, and farther the approbation of his sovereign and country. In certain situations, he said, there was a critical necessity, in which the English power and fortune in Asia depended solely on rapid, well-timed, and extraordinary measures; by such efforts he contended that he had saved India. The presents were ageeable to the general custom of the east; Meer Jaffier had rewarded all those who had been instrumental to his success: the acceptance of such recompense he had never deemed dishonorable, and, it was well known, he had never concealed. Other members of the house, beside enlarging on these topics, farther argued, that his high character and immense fortune, after having been quietly enjoyed for so many years, ought not to be endangered by a scrutiny into a remote period; and that, moreover, his important services ought to have screened him from those charges. This species of logic, that in a case of criminal inquiry, service performed at one time, may be pleaded as a *set-off* against guilt contracted at another, was strongly controverted by Mr. Thurlow, who conducted the attack, while Mr. Wedderburne

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Distin-
guished
abilities of
Messrs.
Thurlow
and Wed-
derburne
shown
against and
for lord
Clive.

headed the defence. A motion being made for censuring his conduct, the acuteness of his advocate did not rest the vindication of lord Clive on a plea of service, which he as fully as Mr. Thurlow admitted to be irrelevant in a criminal charge, but his chief ground of argument was the nature of the evidence, which arose principally from the accused himself, and other leading actors. The testimonies were given by gentlemen who had no conception that their statements could affect themselves; and if rendered the foundation of a prosecution, they would oblige persons to be witnesses to their own detriment, than which nothing could be more inconsistent with justice, and the judicial course of England.^c These arguments, strongly impressed by Mr. Wedderburne, induced the house by a considerable majority to put an end to the inquiry.

War with
the Car-
ribbs.

WHILE East India affairs occupied the chief attention of parliament, some occurrences in the West Indies were also brought under its consideration. The islands of St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Dominica, had formerly been deemed neutral, both by the French and the English. The proprietors of the soil were the Caribbs, being the descendants of the aboriginal Indians, with a small intermixture from fugitive negroes. The French had made establishments in these islands, with the consent of the natives; but had found it necessary, for the secure enjoyment and improvement of their new acquisitions, to court the friendship of the ancient possessors. At the cession of St. Vincent to England, the Caribbs were not mentioned; and when new settlers from Britain undertook to plant the island, orders were given, that while these Indians were inoffensive they should not be disturbed. Most of the French planters sold their estates to British adventurers, who became considerable both in numbers and property; but the most fertile tracts were still in the hands of the Indians. The new colonists, conceiving that such valuable possessions would be much better improved by British industry than by Indian indolence, proposed to government to deprive the natives of the soil fittest for cultivation, and bestow on them tracts more commodious

^c Debrett's Parliamentary Debates, for May 1773.

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for their favourite occupations of hunting and fishing; and administration, foreseeing no opposition from the natives, approved the plan. The exchange was offered by the planters to the Caribbs, but rejected with indignation; they had held their lands they said, independent of the king of France, and would now hold them independent of the king of Great Britain. The British settlers, apprehensive of a contest with such inflexible neighbours, submitted to government, whether it was not expedient, since the Caribbs would not part with their lands, to transport them to the coast of Africa; and ministers too hastily agreed to the scheme. The Caribbs resolved to resist; and a body of troops, in 1772, was ordered from North America to reduce them to subjection: but the rainy season prevented our forces from making progress, and proved extremely sickly. These hostilities became the subject of severe animadversion in parliament; we had, it was said, unjustly attacked the immemorial rights of the Caribbs, and unwisely sent out our soldiers at a season fatal to Europeans who had newly arrived from a more temperate climate. Motions concerning the causes of the war and the state of the troops, caused long and ardent debates in parliament; which, though severally negatived by great majorities, highly excited the public attention. Intelligence at length arrived, that major general Dalrymple and the Caribbs had concluded a peace, in which they had acknowledged themselves the subjects of Great Britain, and promised, in their intercourse with the whites, to be governed by the laws of England; but in their own territories, and in matters relating to each other, they were to retain their ancient customs and usages: they agreed to cede certain districts to the British planters, and acknowledging that they owed their lands to the king's clemency, were allowed to retain all that was necessary for their population and pursuits.

In this session, lord Howe presented a petition from the captains of the navy, praying a small increase of their halfpay. From the reign of Elizabeth till the year 1715, as his lordship showed, naval captains received a halfpay double the amount of that which they received in 1773, when the value of money was so much diminished. It

would be superfluous to employ argumentation in demonstrating the merit and importance of that gallant class of gentlemen, or to prove that the allowance was unsuitable to their rank in society. From the general attachment of Britons to the navy, and their conviction that the recompense was inadequate to the service, the public earnestly desired that the wish of the brave veterans should be accomplished. The minister admitting their claims, lamented that the situation of the finances did not allow additional expenses. The application, however, was so very popular, that a motion was carried in favour of the petition, a suitable address presented to his majesty, and an addition of two shillings a day (amounting in all to six) made to the halfpay of navy captains.

Increase of
halfpay to
naval cap-
tains.

THE dissenters, notwithstanding the disappointment of the former year, brought in a bill for the repeal of penal laws and subscriptions, which, being supported and opposed by the same arguments as before, was rejected.

Bill in fa-
vour of the
dissenters,

is rejected.

THE ways and means of this session showed the financial skill of the minister to be neither excellent nor defective. His calculation, indeed, on the reduction of the national debt, had proved somewhat erroneous, as no part of the funded incumbrance was actually liquidated. Exchequer bills to the amount of 1,800,000*l.* were discharged: and the money advanced to the East India company was not immediately raised, but credit pledged for it in exchequer bills. The session did not rise till July 1st, after having lasted nearly eight months.

Supplies.

Reduction
of the na-
tional debt.

DURING this winter there was a great scarcity of corn, especially in Scotland, and tumults ensued: the rioters, however, by the vigilance of the corn dealers, and the firmness of the magistrates, were prevented from destructive outrage. On the continent of Europe, the partitioning powers this year continued to be the principal objects of observation, while they completed their project of robbery, and compelled the unhappy Poles to sanction their various steps of iniquity and usurpation. As they advanced in spoliation, they grew more indifferent about even the semblance of justice; and whenever the Poles offered any remonstrance, they immediately threatened to over-

Continen-
tal affairs.

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1773.
Comple-
tion of the
dismem-
berment of
Poland.

whelm them with troops.^d A few of the nobility having escaped from Warsaw, betook themselves to Cracow, and there endeavoured to form a party against the plunderers and usurpers; but their attempts were unavailing: the partitioning powers, having dismembered the best provinces in Poland under pretence of amending its constitution, confirmed its defects, and perpetuated the principles of anarchy and confusion. It would be foreign to this history to follow those dragooning lawgivers through the detail of their acts, but they all showed that the object was to render those parts dependent on the partitioning powers through faction and internal disorder, which it did not at present^e suit their purpose to seize by their arms.

RUSSIA was by means so successful against the Turks this year, as in former campaigns. Elated with her victories, she had refused all reasonable terms of accommodation, expecting that her conquering forces would penetrate to Constantinople, and that she might dictate the peace in the enemy's capital. Early in summer, her forces on the Danube took the field, and after some partial and detached advantages, the grand army penetrating to the confines of Romania, found the vizier so strongly posted, that he could prevent the progress of the Russians, without being compelled to hazard a battle. After various masterly but ineffectual movements to bring the enemy to a decisive engagement, Romanzow was obliged to recross the Danube, and at the end of the campaign found himself no farther advanced than at the beginning. In the Crimea and the Levant, the Russian operations, much less important, were equally indecisive: the Turks, indeed, being now retaught the use of arms, commanded by an able and skilful general who possessed the confidence of his soldiers, no longer afforded certain and easy victory.

IT was conceived, that France and Spain were this year preparing to take a part in the war against Russia, of

^d See the manifestoes of the three several powers, addressed to Poland; State Papers, 1773.

^e It may be asked, why did not the confederate invaders usurp the whole kingdom of Poland? Of the reasons of this forbearance, the Annual Register gives a very probable account. "It would have been a matter of no difficulty to form new claims upon as good a foundation as those which they had already made; but it would not have been so easy to have agreed among themselves as to the distribution," Annual Register, 1773, p. 40.

whose progress and power the house of Bourbon was jealous. Their armaments not being confined to the ports on the Mediterranean, and being greater than was necessary to act against the Russians in the Levant and the Archipelago, the Baltic was supposed to be one object of their destination. France was believed to be, through her intimate connexion with the king of Sweden, instigating that prince to a war, which from his lately acquired absolute power, he could the more readily undertake. The equipments of the Bourbon sovereigns, whatever might be their purpose, necessarily aroused the vigilance of England; a powerful fleet was speedily prepared; and the ambassadors of Britain at their respective courts announced, that if they interfered in the war between Russia and Turkey, an English fleet sailing to the Mediterranean would frustrate their projects. The king of Spain, always inimical to this country, appeared disposed to hostilities; but the French king and ministry, desirous as they might be to check the progress of Russia, were far from wishing to involve themselves in a war with Britain, and by their influence at Madrid they prevented a rupture. In Italy, the pope, who had so strenuously maintained the cause of the jesuits, and so obstinately endeavoured to support the customary extortion of his priests, was now dead. His successor, aware that a bishop of Rome was of little consequence out of his own diocese, unless supported by the power of lay sovereigns, determined to cultivate the friendship of those princes. To gratify the united house of Bourbon, he suppressed the jesuits; but allowed individuals who had belonged to that order, to remain in his dominions, provided they rendered themselves useful, without advancing doctrines in support of their late institution, or taking any steps towards its restoration; and this was the final blow to the remains of an order the most celebrated of monkish fraternities. In all the Roman catholic states, the reduction of ecclesiastical power, begun with such effect by the house of Bourbon, was become general; indeed, plans of this sort were so hastily adopted and executed, as rather to manifest that they sprung from imitation than from rational conviction. The exaltation

Attacks of
Roman catholic
powers on
the clergy.

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of priests far beyond their due rank in society, had been very long the fashion, so their excessive depression became now the mode of catholic courts; an undue contempt of ecclesiastics was a favourite sentiment with princes and ministers in those countries wherein they had very recently been regarded with undeserved admiration: those notions, very naturally, in the usual course of human opinion, running into opposite extremes, accelerated the progress of infidelity; and, in their remote consequences, precipitated the downfall of their abettors.

America:

tranquillity, increasing trade, and prosperity.

THOUGH the stubborn republicans of New England continued to thwart the mother country, the middle and southern provinces were peaceably and quietly advancing in population and prosperity. They seemed resolved to cultivate the friendship of Britain, replete with benefit, and which for several years no measure or occurrence had tended to intercept. They appeared well satisfied with the administration of lord North, under which the chief objects of their complaints had been redressed. Relieved from the greater part of the obnoxious imposts, they gave themselves little trouble about the reservation of the principal; and while their purses were spared, forbore quarrelling about metaphysical propositions; they also discouraged the republican agents of their northern neighbours. Bred in monarchical principles, they did not, like the Bostonians, wish to separate from Great Britain merely because it was a monarchy; they were willing to give allegiance for protection, though afforded by the wearer of a crown.

Britain: discontent and licentiousness subside.

AT home, the spirit of licentiousness had subsided; the minister, unassuming and agreeable in his manners, and candid in his opinions, was esteemed able and successful in his administration. His plan for governing India greatly increased his own power and patronage, and was yet pleasing to the country. It was necessary to restrain by some means the oppression, extortion, and cruelty of the company's servants; and the nation conceived the principles and provisions of his system to be effectual for that purpose. His new arrangements would, it was supposed, by preventing the extravagance and depredations of the company's officers, increase this bountiful source of reve-

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Increasing
trade and
prosperity,
imputed to
the policy
of lord
North.

nue, and farther diminish the public burdens. The nation was at peace with all the world, and apparently likely to continue long to enjoy tranquillity; commerce was increasing, and conceived to be in a train of very great augmentation; and every thing appeared favourable to private and public prosperity. Thus during lord North's ministry, his country from being a scene of turbulence and discontent, was become tranquil and satisfied; America, from refusing our manufactures, distressing our commerce, and being almost in rebellion against our government and laws, now afforded an advantageous market for our commodities, enriched our merchants and manufacturers, employed our shipping, exercised our sailors, and declared their attachment to our constitution and king. India, from being the scene of iniquity, was to be administered with justice. Our receipts, recently unequal to our annual expenditure, now, without farther burdening the subject, enabled us to reduce the national debt, and thus ultimately to lessen the taxes on the people. Such was the situation and repute of the minister, and such the opinion and hopes of the people, at the period which the history has now reached; lord North being in the meridian splendor of his administration.

The minister now at the zenith of his fame.

THOUGH the fairness of the prospect was no doubt exaggerated by sanguine imaginations, yet to discerning judgment it was by no means displeasing; tranquillity was restored at home, and in most of the colonies; some progress was making in reducing the national debt; trade was actually increasing, and likely still farther to advance. The effect of the East India plan, either commercial or political, could not with any precision be ascertained; but by restraining, in some degree, fraudulent and predatory appropriation of Indian wealth, seemed calculated to improve the company's finances, and the revenue of Britain. Reflecting politicians saw, that the favourable change in our affairs could not be all traced to the minister's counsels or measures, but they certainly perceived that American tranquillity was to be imputed to his propositions. In these they discovered a mind more inclined to conciliation than coercion, and confidently inferred that lord North would adhere to the soothing policy, of which

CHAP. they had already experienced the salutary effects. No
XI. event or situation had occurred, to exhibit lord North as
1773. a great minister; but there were hitherto no grounds to
question his capacity for successfully conducting the
affairs of his country, in circumstances not more trying
than those which he had yet encountered.

CHAP. XII.

Object of the minister in his proposition respecting the export of tea.—Alarm at Boston.—Discovery of the governor's letters to the English ministry.—News arrives in Boston, that ships laden with tea are on their way.—Riots.—Governor's proclamation is disregarded.—Ships arrive at Boston.—A mob throws the cargo into the sea.—Meeting of Parliament.—King's message respecting the disturbances at Boston, is discussed in parliament.—Bill for blocking up the port of Boston.—The punishment of a whole community for the acts of a part, is defended by ministers.—The principle and provisions of the bill are impugned by opposition as unjust and unwise.—Precedents discussed.—Opposition predict, that it will drive the colonies to confederate revolt.—The bill passes into a law.—Mr. Fuller's motion for repealing the duty on tea.—Mr. Burke's celebrated speech on American taxation.—Coercive plan of ministers farther developed.—Bill for changing the civil government of Massachusetts.—Bill for changing the administration of justice therein.—Quebec bill.—Inquiry into the state of prisons.—Howard.—Supplies.—Literary property ascertained by a decision of the house of peers.—Session closes.—Expectations and apprehensions from the coercive measures of the legislature.

I COME now to a part of the narrative more important than any which has hitherto been the subject of this history. I have to trace the causes and the commencement of a war, which in its progress involved maritime Europe, and in its operations displayed very frequently all the strength of the British character, in which, though the issue proved unfortunate, as the counsels were not rarely unwise, and the executive conduct not seldom dilatory and indecisive, yet the contest was on the whole not inglorious. The mass of British energy was unimpaired. Military ardour and enterprise, naval skill, courage, and

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ability, manifested themselves in all ranks. If Britain, having the whole force of her ancient foes and her recent friends and subjects to combat, did not come off victorious, yet she was not vanquished; she indeed lost her colonies, but did not lose her honour.

VARIOUS were the circumstances, both internal and external, in her cabinet, her senate, her camp, and the combined efforts of her enemies, which tended to depress our country; but all did not effect a lasting humiliation. The national exertions, though far different in success from those during which Pitt had guided her councils, or Marlborough headed her troops, proved that Britain had not degenerated. Severely as the effects of the American war were immediately felt by this country, yet its distant consequences have been most dreadful to continental Europe, by rapidly accelerating that great revolution which now overwhelms so large a portion of the civilized world, and has made the chief abettors of revolt fall into destruction from the principles which that revolt cherished.

Object of
the minister
in his
proposition
concerning
the export
of tea.

LORD NORTH, in his proposition for exporting the teas of the company without paying duty, had a twofold object in view: to relieve the company, and to improve the revenue. The Americans, being informed of the act, viewed it only in the latter light. The associations against importing tea, were still in existence; although, except in Massachusetts bay, little regarded; and the promulgation of this scheme revived their spirit in the more moderate colonies, but in Massachusetts it excited great rage and alarm. It was foreseen, that if the tea were once introduced and landed, it would be impossible to prevent its sale and consumption, and thus the inhabitants would be obliged to pay the duty, notwithstanding all their efforts to oppose taxation. As tea had been clandestinely imported even to Boston, the dealers, who were very numerous, were afraid that the trade might be taken out of their hands, and become entirely dependent on the consignees of the East India company. These, from the connexion now subsisting between the company and the administration, were gentlemen who favoured government, and were of course unpopular in New England.

Alarm at
Boston.

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Discovery
of the go-
vernors'
letters to
the Eng-
lish minis-
ters.

THERE was another circumstance also, which rendered these colonists more inimical than ever to government, and consequently more determined to oppose its measures and misconstrue its intentions. Some years before this time, the governor and deputy governor of Massachusetts had written confidential letters to official persons in England, containing a very unfavourable view of the state of affairs, and of the temper, dispositions, and designs of the leaders in that province. They alleged, that a republican spirit prevailed there, which would resist the measures of Britain, however equitable; that to reduce the inhabitants to obedience, coercion was necessary; and that a considerable change of the constitution and system of government was requisite, to ensure the subordination of the colony; and proposed, that the alteration should be such as would abridge their liberties. By some means not yet discovered, doctor Franklin, agent for the province in England, got the letters into his possession. Franklin was also deputy postmaster-general for America, an office which he held from the appointment of the British government; from gratitude, therefore, he might have been presumed to be attached to his employers. Perhaps the possessor of the letters might, on this supposition, have shown them to him, in order to illustrate some opinion respecting the conduct of the Americans; but howsoever he might have discovered them, it was to be expected that he, who must have seen their nature and tendency, would not have published papers which must necessarily embroil the governor and the colonies. Franklin, nevertheless, did make them known, by transmitting them to the provincial assembly then sitting at Boston. The animosity and indignation excited by their perusal were, as the informer must have foreseen, very violent. The assembly sent a deputation to inquire whether the governor acknowledged the signatures; and the subscription being owned, they prepared a petition and remonstrance to be presented to the king, charging the governor with betraying his trust by giving partial and false information, declaring him an enemy to the colony, and praying for his removal from office. This new source of discord rendered the Bostonians more open to other causes. The con-

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News arrives at
Boston of
the approach of
ships laden
with tea.

Riots.

Governor's
proclamation ;

is disregarded.

Ships arrive with
tea.

signees of the East India company were chiefly of the family and nearest connexions of the governor and deputy governor, and were thus the more obnoxious to the hatred of the Bostonians.

In the month of November, intelligence was received that three ships laden with tea were on their passage to Boston. Tumults, violence, and riot, were excited, to frighten the consignees from acting in their intended capacity. Some of the company's agents were so intimidated as to yield to this lawless violence, and to relinquish their appointments, but others resolved to discharge their duty. Committees were appointed in different towns, to which the constituents delegated much greater powers than justly and legally they possessed themselves. They authorized the deputies to inspect the books of merchants, to impose tests, and to inflict punishment on those who resisted their tyrannical proceedings. These violent measures were not confined to the province of Massachusetts, but extended to the other colonies ; it was, however, at Boston that they proceeded to flagrant outrage. There the populace, with the imperious insolence of a democratical mob, commanded the agents to relinquish their appointments ; but those gentlemen refused to deviate from engagements which justice sanctioned, and law authorized ; and the rioters attacked the houses of the refractory consignees, whom they obliged to take refuge in Castle William. The governor issued a proclamation, commanding the civil magistrates to suppress the riots, and protect the peaceable and well disposed inhabitants^f ; but the proclamation was disregarded and despised, and the sheriff insulted for attempting to read it at one of the illegal meetings. In December 1773, three ships belonging to the company arrived at Boston ; and the very day on which they came to port, one of the first objects that they beheld was a customhouse officer tarred and feathered by a riotous multitude, because he had performed the duties of his office. The populace manifested so general a spirit of enmity and revenge against all whom they supposed to be connected with the importation of tea, that the captains were afraid

to attempt the landing of their cargoes, and offered to return to England, if they could obtain the proper discharges from the consignees, the customhouse, and the governor: but though these officers would not venture to land the tea, they refused to give the captains a discharge while their cargoes remained on board, for the delivery of which they were engaged by the company. A meeting of the inhabitants had expressed a determination to send the cargoes and ships back to England, and applied to the customhouse for a clearance, and to the governor for leave for the ships to pass Castle William; and the refusal of both being reported, the Americans apprehended that it was the design of the government officers to land the tea privately, which would render it impossible to prevent its gradual sale, and consequently the taxation, which the Bostonians abhorred. To oppose this, a number of armed men, in the evening of the 18th of December, disguised as Indians, boarded the ships, and threw the cargoes into the sea.

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VII.

1773.

A mob throws the cargoes into the sea.

BEFORE the news of this outrage arrived in England, parliament had assembled. That august body met on the 13th of January 1774. The principal subjects of the king's speech were, the pacific disposition of other foreign powers, though the war between Russia and Turkey still continued; a general recommendation to employ our tranquillity from abroad in improving our condition at home, and especially to prosecute such measures as should tend to advance our commerce and revenue. Under these heads, he recommended them to pay particular attention to the gold coin, which was then very much impaired. On the disputes of America his majesty did not enter, as no information had yet been received of the violent proceedings of the colonists during the recess of parliament. In February, however, intelligence arrived of the riot in Boston; and on the 7th of March, a message was delivered from his majesty to the house of commons by lord North, purporting, that in consequence of the unwarrantable practices carried on in America, and particularly the outrageous proceedings at the town and port of Boston, with a view of obstructing the commerce of this kingdom, and upon grounds and pretences imme-

1774.

Meeting of parliament.

Message of the king respecting the disturbances at Boston;

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discussed
in parlia-
ment.

diately subversive of the constitution, it was thought fit to lay the whole matter before parliament. The king confided as well in their zeal for the maintenance of his majesty's authority, as in their attachment to the general interest and welfare of all his dominions. He trusted that they would not only enable him effectually to adopt such measures as might be most likely to put an immediate stop to these disorders, but would also take into their most serious consideration what farther regulations and permanent provisions might be necessary to be established for better securing the execution of the laws, and the just dependence of the colonies upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain. This message being delivered, a great number of papers were laid before the house, consisting of copies and extracts of letters from the different magistrates and officers, the votes and resolutions of the inhabitants of Boston, and many other documents both authentic and important. An address to his majesty was proposed, strongly expressing the readiness of parliament to comply with the requisition of the royal message. Though this motion was carried without a division, it produced a very general discussion of American affairs, and of the mode and extent of the inquiries which should be made. Members of opposition admitted, that America was in a very disordered state; but contended, that the disturbances arose from one radical cause, taxation; and until that was removed, discontent would always continue in the colonies. They ought to inquire into the conduct of the Americans who had resisted government, and punish them according to the guilt established by proof. They ought also to examine the system of violence which had provoked, and of weakness which had encouraged, their resistance. The house could only support ministers, after investigating their conduct, and finding it wise and equitable; therefore a strict retrospect into their management was essentially connected with an inquiry concerning the state of America. If they had acted prudently, such a review would terminate to their honour; but if unwisely, it behoved parliament not to encourage weakness and ignorance. The retrospect here proposed was not for a judicial purpose, to have ministers

tried or punished ; but a deliberative, to direct the conduct of the legislature. Ministers warmly opposed this twofold consideration of the subject ; and contended, that the inquiry should be confined to the mere misbehaviour of the Bostonians. Were it to extend to other subjects, it would retard a business peculiarly pressing ; and also encourage the disaffected colonists, by inducing them to suppose that there was in the British parliament a disposition to lessen their guilt by throwing blame on the executive government. The proposed retrospect was therefore not only unnecessary, but even dangerous : although ministers did not here prove that, in examining subjects of deliberative measures, it was better to rest contented with part of the facts than to scrutinize the whole (and that was the amount of their argument,^s) yet they succeeded in persuading parliament to confine its attention to the violence and outrages of the Americans, without seeking to trace the causes. On this imperfect knowledge of facts, the British legislators proceeded to deliberate on questions involving the preservation or loss of a most valuable part of the empire. As the grounds of their procedure were partial, it might have been expected that they would have investigated the parts which they professed to consider, before they passed any laws upon them : it will be presently seen, in what manner, and to what extent, cognizance of the case preceded delivery of judgment. Parliament agreeing to inquire on the partial system proposed by government, ministers contended, that two subjects must be obtained, satisfaction to the East India company for the loss which they had incurred by the destruction of the tea ; and reparation to the honour of Britain, for the insult which was offered to it in the forcible transgression of its laws. They vindicated the conduct of the governor, in not having employed the military force of the castle and ships of war to prevent the destruction of the cargoes : the leading men in Boston had, they alleged, always remonstrated against the interposition of the army and navy, and had imputed the past disturbances to their inter-

^s See Parliamentary Debates, March 1774 ; and afterwards on the Boston port bill.

CHAP. ^{VI.} ference. Mr. Hutchinson manifested great prudence and discretion in forbearing an employment of his force, which would have been irritating to the minds of the people ; and might well have hoped, that by thus confiding in their conduct, and trusting to the civil power, he should have quieted their tumultuous violence, and preserved the public peace. The event, however, proved contrary to his well-grounded expectations ; the disposition and temper of the Bostonians, freed from the influence of fear, had been fairly tried, and had fully manifested themselves ; and their conduct had demonstrated, that it was impossible for the powers now vested in government to prevent atrocious outrages. Our commerce, it was now evident, could no longer be safe in the harbour of Boston ; and it was absolutely necessary, that some other port should be found for receiving our merchandise. The minister therefore proposed, for the purpose of private indemnification and public satisfaction, a bill for shutting up the port of Boston, and prohibiting the lading or unlading of all goods or merchandise (except stores for his majesty's service, and provisions and fuel for the use of the inhabitants) at any place within its precincts, from and after the 1st of June, until it should appear to his majesty, that peace and obedience to the laws were so far restored in the town of Boston, that trade might again be safely carried on, and his majesty's customs be duly collected. In that case, his majesty might, by proclamation, open the harbour ; but not even then, until it should appear that satisfaction had been made to the East India company for the destruction of their tea, and also to those who had suffered by the riots at the time of its arrival at Boston.^h

Bill for
blocking
up the port
of Boston.

The punishment of
a whole
community for the
acts of a
part is defended by
ministers.

LORD NORTH observed during the progress of the bill, that to fine communities for their neglect in not punishing offences committed within their limits, was justified by several precedents. In king Charles the second's time, when Dr. Lamb was killed by unknown persons, the city of London was fined ; when captain Porteus was violently and illegally put to death by a mob, the city of Edinburgh was fined and otherwise punished ; and when Mr.

Campbell's house at Glasgow was pulled down, part of the revenue of the town was sequestrated to make good the damage. Boston, he observed, was much more criminal than either of the three cities that he had mentioned; that town had been upwards of seven years in riot and confusion; and there all the disturbances in America had originated. By this bill, Boston might certainly suffer; but she deserved to suffer, and she would suffer far less punishment than her delinquencies merited: the duration of her punishment was entirely in her own power; whenever she should make satisfaction for her past injuries, and give full assurance of her future obedience, his majesty would doubtless restore her to her former situation, and open her port. The present was a crisis which demanded vigour; for it was necessary to convince America, that Britain would not suffer her laws, her government, and the rights of her subjects to be violated with impunity. It might be alleged (ministers said) that the plan was wise and just, but that the execution would be difficult; to this they replied, that though the friends of British authority in America might suffer a little from their adherence to the cause, which was unpopular among the infatuated Bostonians, and our merchants might experience some diminution of trade from the determination of malcontents to refuse British commodities, and from the exclusion of commerce from this port, the inconvenience of either would be temporary and short. The present and proposed measures would either induce or compel those deluded men to return to their duty. No military force would be requisite to carry them into execution, for four or five frigates would be sufficient to effectuate our double purpose; but even if military force were wanted, it could act effectually without bloodshed. The other colonies, it was expected, would approve of the proper punishment being inflicted on those who had disobeyed the laws: but, even were they to combine with the rioters of Massachusetts Bay, the consequences of this rebellion would rest not with us, but with themselves: we were only answerable that our measures should be just and equitable.

DURING the progress of the bill, petitions were presented, deprecating its acceptance, upon a very plain prin-

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Opposition
contents
that the
bill is un-
just and
unwise.

Precedents
are discus-
sed.

ciple of jurisprudence, *that no man or men can justly be condemned without being heard*; that the charges against the Bostonians were adduced on the report of the governor, who was notoriously at variance with that town and the whole province; that the proposed measure proceeded from the accusation of an enemy, on which partial ground it contained a sentence delivered, without hearing the accused party: the outrages committed were not within the jurisdiction of the city of Boston; for the harbour was under the command of the executive power, and the governor, not the city of Boston, was answerable for a neglect of authority there. In the alleged precedents of London and Edinburgh, the cases were totally dissimilar; the offences had been committed within the jurisdiction of those cities, and no judgment had been passed, until the cause was fully canvassed, after hearing both parties.ⁱ This was the purport of the petitions, one of which, from natives and inhabitants of North America, was heard, but

ⁱ The following statement, drawn up from the petitions, and from the reasonings of members inimical to the Boston port bill, and published in the periodical works of the times, shows the absolute inapplicability of Porteus's noted case to the riot at Boston.

PROCEEDINGS AGAINST

EDINBURGH,

Began the 10th of February, 1737, and ended June 21st, having continued four months.

The provost and magistrates of Edinburgh, the judges of Scotland, and many other witnesses examined at the bar of the house.

Counsel and evidence for the magistrates and city fully heard at the bar.

Two members for Edinburgh, forty-five for Scotland, in the lower house; and sixteen in the upper.

Charge--an overt act of rebellion, and an atrocious murder; proved on a full hearing, and by competent evidences.

Frequent conferences held between the two houses, to compare the evidence, &c.

Punishment--a fine of 2000l.

Proof--journals of the lords and commons in 1737, against Edinburgh and the bill.

BOSTON,

Began the 14th, and ended 31st of March, 1774, being in all seventeen days.

Witnesses examined by the privy council, and their evidence suppressed.

The agent refused a hearing at the bar.

Not one member for Boston in either house, nor for all or any part of America, nor even a voice in electing one.

Charge--a riot and trespasses; no evidence, and no hearing.

Not one conference.

Punishment--the loss of their port, to the injury of the town, at the lowest rate, 500,000l. The restoration of their port, and the use of their property left at the king's mercy; after they shall have paid for rotten tea the price of sound, to the amount of 30,000l.

Proof--journals of the lords and commons 1774, and the Boston port bill.

not regarded; another, presented by the agent of Massachusetts Bay for the inhabitants of Boston, was not received. The bill was opposed in the house, on the two grounds of justice and expediency. The arguments on the first head were nearly the same as those which were employed by the petitioners, that the whole city of Boston was punished for an offence not committed within its jurisdiction, and without being heard in its own vindication; it was besides alleged, that even if the culpability had been admitted, the punishment far exceeded the crime. Corporations, for neglecting to suppress tumults within their jurisdiction, had been frequently fined, but never deprived of the means of industry and trade. The restoration of their port being rendered dependent upon the king, became in fact dependent on the king's ministers; and thus the Bostonians were placed, without a trial, in a situation in which they must incur commercial ruin, or comply with ministerial mandates. Besides, intelligence had arrived, that tea had been destroyed in most of the other colonies as well as Massachusetts; why then make an act of parliament for punishing a part, until they had examined the conduct of the whole? It was contrary to justice, and the constitutional rights of British subjects, to be taxed without their own consent; and all the disaffection and resistance had arisen from taxation, combined with the weak and wavering systems of ministry. Administration, aware of the real cause, eagerly stifled inquiry, and called upon legislature to act upon their assertions and those of their agents. The law was inexpedient in a commercial view, as our trade must suffer, and that not by preclusion from Boston only; for other colonies were equally inimical to the tea duty as Massachusetts, and had discontinued, or at least diminished, their trade with Britain. It was politically hurtful; as it would irritate and tempt the colonies to resist, instead of intimidating them to submit; in short, it was the offspring of narrow understanding, incapable of comprehending the series of consequences which would and must result from such a law. In various opinions and sentiments the colonies were divided, but on the subject of taxation they were unanimous. Thus ministers and their supporters were taking the very means

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Opposition
predict
that it will
drive the
colonists to
confederat-
ed revolt.
Bill is pas-
sed into a
law.

to drive to a confederacy, provinces, some of which might have been kept separately, and in the interests of the mother country; and the combination would necessarily produce a forcible resistance to Britain, which, whatever should be its ultimate issue, must be pernicious to the contending parties. These reasons, however forcible they were, had no influence with the majority of the parliament; the bill was carried through both houses, and passed into a law, after a discussion of seventeen days.

THE historian who impartially considers this momentous law, with all the circumstances from which directly or indirectly it arose, will allow, that the proceedings of Massachusetts Bay had for a series of years been dictated by principles wholly inconsistent with the constitutional authority of the British government over its subjects; that in opposing taxation, they had manifested a democratical spirit, not only in declarations and writings, but by acts of atrocious outrage; that it was very natural for ministers to be incensed against the avowers of such doctrines, and the perpetrators of such deeds: but he will also observe, on the other hand, that the fluctuation of mildness and harshness, coercion and indulgence, (the conciliatory measures being proposed only after rigorous experiments had been found ineffectual,) enraged the colonists against the mother country for her apprehended intentions, without leading them to fear her power. In the measures which were adopted in consequence of the riot in Boston, the historian must discover a violence and precipitancy which more obviously displayed the impulse of anger, than discriminating justice cautiously examining every circumstance, or expanded wisdom viewing causes, operations, and their consequences. The impartial reader must see, that an act of the British parliament, most important in its judicial operation, but infinitely more momentous in its political efforts, was passed when the legislative assembly was influenced by passion.

THE Boston port bill being passed, a fleet of four ships of war was ordered to sail for Boston; and as a military force was thought necessary to reduce the inhabitants to obedience, general Gage, commander in chief in America, was appointed governor of Massachusetts Bay, in the

room of Mr. Hutchinson, who had asked leave to return to England. For the execution of the act, powers were granted to Gage, by commission under the great seal, to bestow pardons for treason and all other crimes, and to remit fines and forfeitures to offenders whom he should think proper objects of mercy.

Soon after the enactment of this law, Mr. Rose Fuller made a motion for repealing the duty on tea, the only remaining part of Mr. Charles Townshend's plan of 1767, so obnoxious to America. While parliament, he said, punished the outrages of the licentious and riotous, it was wise to gratify the well-affected colonists. The greater number even of those who were most attached to the mother country was inimical to taxation; the duty was itself trifling, and its abandonment would be a very small sacrifice, were it either to preserve or restore tranquillity to the provinces. The arguments of most speakers on this subject were nearly the same as had been employed in former discussions. Mr. Edmund Burke, however, delivered a speech on American taxation, which renders this motion an epoch in the history of philosophical and political eloquence. His ground of argument was, **EXPEDIENCE PROVED FROM EXPERIENCE**. He traced the history of the American colonies, and the policy of this country, from their first settlement to the commencement of the present reign, demonstrating the advantages of the former policy. The measures of the king's ministers were, he said, a deviation from that system; a deviation unjust both to Britain and her colonies. Having pursued their history from the beginning to the time at which he spoke, he divided it into periods, described and characterised each period, and the principal actors by whom they were respectively influenced, with the effects on the welfare of both the colonies and the parent state; he deduced from the whole the following recommendation: "Leave the Americans as they anciently stood: they and we, and their and our ancestors, have been happy under that system. *Oppose the ancient policy and practice of the empire, as a rampart against the speculations of innovations, and they will stand on a manly and sure ground.*"

Burke's celebrated speech on American taxation.

In a few lines he marked the prominent features of minis-

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terial policy, with the utmost accuracy of historical truth. "Never have the servants of the state looked at the whole of your complicated interests in one connected view: they have taken things by bits and scraps, just as they pressed, without regard to their relations and dependencies: they never had any system, right or wrong, but only occasionally invented some miserable tale of the day, in order meanly to sneak out of difficulties into which they had proudly strutted." Ministers opposed the motion, because a repeal at such a time would show fluctuation and inconsistency, which would defeat the good effects of the vigorous plan that, after too long remissness, was at last adopted. The motion was negatived. The disposition to carry things to extremities with America was become very general. As the repeal of the stamp act was much condemned, and its authors greatly decried by the ministerial adherents, they formed the most sanguine expectations that strong measures would prove ultimately successful.

Coercive
plan of
ministers
further de-
veloped.

THE Boston port bill was only a part of the coercive plan which administration had now adopted. The civil government of Massachusetts Bay was inadequate, ministers alleged, to the suppression of tumults and the preservation of the peace. To remedy this defect, an act was passed, which should deprive the lower house of assembly in Massachusetts Bay of the privilege of electing the members of the council, and vest that privilege in the crown; authorize the king, or his substitute the governor, to appoint the judges, magistrates, and sheriffs, and empower the sheriffs to summon and return juries; and, for the prevention of factious assemblies, prohibit town meetings from being called by the select men, unless with the consent of the governor.^k In support of the bill, it was alleged, that the force of the civil power consists in the *posse comitatus*, but the posse are the very people who commit the riots. If the democratic part disregarded the laws, how were they to be enforced by the governor? He could neither appoint nor remove magistrates; that power was vested in the council, the members of which were

BHI for
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ment of
Massachu-
setts.

^k Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 89.

dependent upon the people. The civil magistrate caught the tone and sentiments of the people among whom he lived ; from them he ultimately derived his appointment ; and, though the military forces were ever so numerous and active, they could not move to support magistracy, as no magistrate could call upon them for assistance. It was therefore necessary to alter the executive and judicial powers of the Massachusetts government, and to form them upon the model of the royal governments in the more southern colonies. It was objected to the bill, that it was an arbitrary and dangerous measure to take away the civil constitution of a whole people secured by a charter, the validity of which was not so much as questioned at law, upon loose allegations of delinquencies and defects, without evidence to show the necessity of such an act. The pretence of annulling the charter to strengthen government, could not stand the test of examination ; for the colonies, already regulated in the manner proposed by the bill, were no less inimical to taxation, than Massachusetts Bay. The part of the act which affected juries, was framed, without any pretence of abuse ; and the case of captain Preston was in itself sufficient to show, that juries could act justly even at the expense of popularity. The cause of the disturbances was not the system of polity ; it was the imposition of taxes which had rendered the people dissatisfied, as well in the royal governments as in the other ; and no remedy would be efficient, without the removal of the cause. This act had a quite contrary tendency ; instead of giving strength to government, it was calculated to annihilate the remains of British authority in the colonies. A petition was presented by Mr. Bollan, the agent of Massachusetts Bay province, praying that the bill might not pass until advice should arrive from the colony, and that they might be heard in their own defence by counsel, before their constitution, which had been confirmed by the most solemn charters, was subverted. In the conclusion they made a very strong and pathetic entreaty to the house to consider, " that the restraints which such acts of severity impose, " are ever attended with the most dangerous hatred ; in a " distress of mind which cannot be described, the petitioners conjure the house not to convert that zeal and

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"affection which has hitherto united every American hand and heart in the interests of England, into passions the most painful and pernicious; they most earnestly beseech the house not to attempt reducing them to a state of slavery, which the English principles of liberty that they inherit from their mother-country will render worse than death; and that the house will not, by passing these bills, reduce their countrymen to the most abject state of misery and humiliation, or drive them to the last resources of despair." After a very warm debate, the bill was passed by a great majority, on the 22d of May 1774, in the house of commons; and nine days after, the same arguments being repeated, it passed in the house of peers.

Bill for
changing
the admin-
istration of
justice
therein.

LORD NORTH now prepared a third bill, "for the impartial administration of justice in the cases of persons questioned for any acts done by them in the execution of the law; or for the suppression of riots and tumults in the province of Massachusetts Bay in New England." According to the bill, the governor was empowered, if he found that any person indicted for murder, or some other capital offence, incurred in suppressing tumults and riots, should not be likely to have fair trial in the province, to send them to any other colony, or to Great Britain. This bill, the minister alleged, was necessary to give effect to the two others; it was in vain, he said, to appoint a magistracy that would act, if none could be found hardy enough to put their orders into execution. These orders would most probably be resisted, and this resistance would render force necessary to execute the laws; in this case, blood would probably be spilt. Who, said lord North, would risk this event, though in the execution of his clearest duty, if the rioters themselves, or their abettors, were to sit as the judges? How can any man defend himself, on the plea of executing your laws, before those persons who deny your right to make any law to bind themselves? He further alleged, that such an act was not without precedent; smugglers apprehended for offences committed on the coast of Sussex, had been made triable in the county of Middlesex, and the Scotch rebels in England. The proposed act did not tend to establish a mili-

tary, but a civil, government; it gave to the province a council, magistrates, and justices, when in fact they had none before; it did not screen guilt, but protected innocence: we must show the Americans, that we would no longer quietly submit to their insults, and that, when roused, our measures, without being cruel and vindictive, were necessary and efficacious. This act would complete his legislative plan; the rest depended upon vigilance and vigour in the executive government, which his lordship promised should not be wanting. The four regiments usually stationed over America, had all been ordered to Boston, and prosecutions had been directed against the ringleaders in sedition; he made no doubt that, by the steady execution of the measures now adopted, obedience and the blessings of *peace* would be restored; *and the event, he predicted, would be advantageous and happy to this country.* This bill was opposed with no less vehemence and force than the two preceding laws: the members in opposition denied its alleged foundation, that it would tend to the impartial administration of justice; if a party spirit against the authority of Great Britain would condemn an active officer there as a murderer, the same party spirit for the authority of Great Britain might here acquit a murderer as a zealous performer of his duty; but the fact was, that though by the bill the people were precluded from the exercise of their rights, no abuse had been proved, or even attempted to be proved: there was no evidence that justice had not been impartially administered by the tribunals established; on the contrary, the instances (colonel Barré observed) which had happened, were direct confutations of such charges. The case of captain Preston was recent; this officer and some soldiers had been indicted at Boston for murder, in killing some persons during the suppression of a riot; they were fairly tried, and fully acquitted. It was an American jury, a New England jury, a Boston jury, which tried and acquitted the accused. Captain Preston had, under his hand, publicly declared, that the inhabitants of the very town where their fellow citizens had been slain, acquitted himself. This was the very case which the act supposed. The precedents attempted to be drawn from trials for smuggling, it was contended, were,

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like those adduced to support the former bills, totally inapplicable. It was not difficult for either a prosecutor or a defendant in Sussex, to attend the trial in Middlesex ; but the act now proposed was a virtual indemnity for all murders and capital offences committed in the alleged execution of the laws. The distance was so great, and the expenses would be so heavy, that scarcely any man would undertake to be a prosecutor, even though his near relation were murdered. Ministers were proceeding on the partial information of interested partisans, and upon their misrepresentations had framed the most destructive laws ; the consequence of this act would be, the establishment of a military government, replete with the most lawless violence. The people had been long complaining of oppression ; and now, that so many troops were ordered to Boston, they would consider them as the instruments of farther tyranny, which there were no longer efficient courts of law to restrain. The soldiers, it was said, unawed by the civil power, and prepossessed with an idea that the people were rebellious, would, in spite of the vigilance of their officers, be guilty of such violence as would rouse its objects to resistance ; and the consequence would be open rebellion. " You are (said colonel Barré, in an eloquent and impressive peroration) urging this desperate, this destructive issue ; you are urging it with such violence, and by measures tending so manifestly to that fatal point, that, though a state of madness only could inspire such an intention, it would appear to be your deliberate purpose. You have changed your ground ; you are becoming the aggressors, and are offering the last of human outrages to the people of America, by subjecting them in effect to military execution. I know the vast superiority of your disciplined troops over the provincials : but beware how you supply the want of discipline by desperation. Instead of offering them the olive branch, you have sent the naked sword ; by the olive branch, I mean a repeal of all the late laws, fruitless to you and oppressive to the colonies. Ask their aid in a constitutional manner, and they will give it to the utmost of their ability ; they never yet refused it when properly called upon ; your journals bear recorded acknowledgments of the zeal with which they have contri-

“buted to the general necessity of the state : they might be flattered into any thing, but are not to be driven. Have some indulgence to your own likeness ; respect their sturdy English virtue ; retract your odious exertions of authority ; and remember, that the first step towards making them contribute to your wants, is to reconcile them to your government.” Mr. Rose Fuller, venerable for his years and parliamentary experience, and for independence of character, by no means uniformly an opponent to government, and indeed belonging to no party, ended a long speech against this bill with the following words : “ I will now take my leave of the whole plan : you will commence their ruin from this day. I am sorry to say, that not only the house has fallen into this error, but the people approve of the measure. The people, I am sorry to say it, are misled ; but a short time will prove the evil tendency of this bill. If ever there was a nation running headlong to its destruction, it is this.” Whatever reasons could be urged against the bill, the votes for it were very numerous, and it passed the house of commons by a great majority. No less strength of argument was exerted in opposition to this measure in the house of lords ; and though from the ample discussion which it had undergone among the commons, little novelty of reasoning could be expected from either side, yet one new consideration was urged against it by the opposing lords. The means adopted, it was alleged, for retaining the colonies in obedience by an army rendered independent of the ordinary course of law in the place where they were employed, would prove the ruin of the nation, by extending that instrument of arbitrary power. Strong protests were framed against the three several bills. The protesting lords were chiefly those of the Rockingham part of opposition ; lord Chatham was himself confined by illness : neither his name, those of earls Temple or Shelburne, of lord Camden, or any other of his particular friends, are found in the lists of the dissentients. In the house of commons, the two divisions of anti-ministerial senators spoke strenuously against the series of coercive acts. The orations on these questions displayed distinguished ability on both sides, but the most transcendent genius on the side of opposition. Besides

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Mr. Burke, that party now possessed Mr. Charles Fox, whose powers far surpassed those of the most brilliant and illustrious commoners that were ranged on the side of administration. This extraordinary man, with his mind fast approaching to maturity, on being abruptly dismissed from his office of a lord of the admiralty, had turned his strength against the minister, and proved the most formidable adversary that he ever encountered while at the head of affairs. From the nature of the subjects, a great portion of the speeches on the three bills being intended to demonstrate their probable effects either good or bad, was prophetic. On comparing the predictions of ministry and of opposition with the actual course of events, the comprehensive reader must see that the great part of what the ministers advanced proved false, and of what opposition advanced proved true. Ministers were, indeed, beyond all question extremely deficient in information. They had by no means employed sufficient pains to procure an adequate knowledge of facts; but formed their judgment and plans from imperfect materials. Opposition especially governor Pownall, governor Johnstone, and far beyond all, Mr. Burke, acquired so extensive an acquaintance with the state, sentiments, opinions, and characters of the respective colonies, as afforded light both to themselves and the rest of the party. Opposition, indeed, was anxious to open, and ministers to shut, all avenues to knowledge concerning North America, the most important subject of their counsels and plans.

Quebec
bill.

THE session was now drawing near the usual season of recess, and many of the members, thinking that no business of importance would be laid before parliament previously to its prorogation, had retired into the country. They were, however, mistaken in their opinion; the plan of government respecting America was not yet complete. In the beginning of June, a bill was brought into the house, for the administration of the province of Quebec. The professed objects of the proposed arrangements were, to ascertain the limits of that province, which extended far beyond what had been settled as such by the king's proclamation of 1763; to secure to the inhabitants the free exercise of their religion, and to the Roman catholic clergy those rights

which were agreeable to the articles of capitulation at the time of the surrender of the province; to restore their ancient laws in civil cases without a trial by jury, as being more acceptable to the French Canadians than the English laws with the trial by jury; and to establish a council, holding their commissions from and at the pleasure of the king, who were to exercise all the powers of legislation, that of imposing taxes only excepted. Such a council, composed principally of the Canadian noblesse it was supposed, would be more agreeable to the bulk of the people, than a house of representatives.

In favour of this law, it was argued, that political establishments ought to be adapted to the sentiments, opinions, manners, and habits of those for whom they were formed. The French, who constituted a great majority of the inhabitants of Canada, having been accustomed to an absolute government, neither valued nor understood a free constitution. The Canadian French abhorred the idea of a popular representation, from observing the mischiefs that it produced in the colonies adjoining their country. They were not yet ripe for a British constitution; their landed property had been all granted, and their family settlements made, on the ideas of French law; as for the laws concerning contracts and personal property, they were nearly the same in France as in England. Having been wholly unused to trial by jury, they disliked it as an innovation; and the treaty of Paris had secured to the French Canadians the free exercise of their religion, as far as was consistent with the laws of England. Our acts concerning popery, it was asserted, did not, like the king's supremacy, extend beyond the kingdom; the Roman catholic Canadians were obliged to give a proof of their allegiance; and an oath was prescribed as a test against papal claims, incompatible with the duty of subjects. By securing their tithes to the popish clergy, the act did no more than restore them to the situation which they held at the conquest; subject however, to the disadvantage, that no person professing the protestant religion was to contribute any thing to their support. The extension of the province beyond the limits described in the proclamation, was justified by the plea, that several French families were settled in remote parts of the country,

Arguments for
the bill;

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against it.

beyond the former districts, and an entire colony was established among the Illinois Indians.

THE arguments against the bill were reducible to two heads; the incongruity and danger of an arbitrary government, established by the British legislature in any part of the empire, and the establishment of the Roman catholic religion. The measure was said to be an experiment of absolute power tried in one colony, in order to extend by degrees that mode of ruling to all the others. The immense enlargement of the boundaries of Canada was alleged to be for the same purpose, to have a powerful instrument for subjugating the colonies. The proposed annihilation of the popular assembly was attributed to the dislike which ministry entertained for the rights of the people. The great security of liberty consisted in the power of having civil actions tried by a jury, as in cases of arbitrary imprisonments, and many other violations of the rights of subjects. This had always been the mode of seeking redress; and the English laws would be greatly aggrieved in being subjected to French customs, and French forms of trial. On the subject of religion, it was contended, that the capitulation had only provided that the Roman catholic faith should be tolerated. This privilege, opposition was willing to allow them in the fullest extent; but by the proposed bill, they said, instead of being tolerated, it was established. The people of Canada had hitherto been happy under toleration, and looked for nothing farther. By this establishment, said they, the protestant religion enjoys at least no more than a toleration; for the popish clergy have a legal parliamentary right to a maintenance, while the protestant clergy are left at the king's discretion. Various amendments were proposed in the house of commons, and several changes took place; but the ground work continued the same. A petition was presented by the city of London to the king, praying him to withhold the royal assent: as the bill regarded religion, a very great popular clamour was excited, and an apprehension of popery revived. It went through the houses, however, with a very great majority, and was, on the 22d of June, passed into a law.

The bill is
passed.

ALTHOUGH America occupied, during this most memorable session, the principal attention of parliament, several

other affairs of considerable importance came before the houses. The diminution of the gold coin had been long a subject of general complaint. In the close of the session of 1773, it had been brought before parliament; and an act was passed on the last day of the session, to prevent the counterfeiting or diminishing the gold coin of the kingdom. By the law, the loss on the diminished gold, amounting to a very large sum, fell upon the immediate possessors, and thereby principally affected the great money holders or bankers. During the recess its operation had been severely felt, and the more especially as the commercial world had not yet recovered from the distresses occasioned by the failures of the former year. The law had become very unpopular at the commencement of the session of 1774; and several strictures were passed on the gold coin act, which was affirmed to be highly oppressive and injurious to individuals. Bankers had received coin according to its nominal value, on the public faith, and under the sanction of government. It was very unjust that a particular body of men should be obliged to make good to the public a loss sustained through the iniquity of others, and the culpable negligence of the police in not restraining such criminal and pernicious practices. The lateness of the season at which the law was proposed, when many members had left town, and the hurry with which it had been carried through the houses, so as to afford no time for examining its nature and tendency, also underwent severe animadversion. It was answered by the minister, that the evil had been so urgent as not to admit of any delay, and that it was necessary to be remedied, even late as it was in the session. He denied that it was unjust; for the loss, he contended, had fallen on those who had been gainers by the situation which occasioned it, and who had always profited by the public money. A committee, however, was appointed to take into consideration the state of the gold coin, and in consequence of their report, weights were established, under the direction of the officers of the mint, a conformity to which was necessary to constitute a current gold coin, and a recoinage took place agreeably to that standard. The effect of these regulations was, that no person could be defrauded in the

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Inquiry in-
to the state
of the pri-
sons. How-
ard

receipt of gold coin, except by his own negligence in not weighing the proffered money, and this was a very material reform in the great medium of commerce.

DURING this session, a committee having been appointed for inquiring into abuses practised in gaols, among other gentlemen examined was Mr. Howard, sheriff of Bedford, a man of exquisite philanthropy, who, it was found, had visited those mansions of misery through the greater part of England at a very heavy expense, and with a continual risk of his life, in order to devise and administer relief. From the reports delivered by him to the house, several improvements were immediately suggested, and many more were ultimately devised, which have since tended so powerfully to mitigate human wretchedness. The thanks of the house were unanimously returned to the benevolent man who had inspected such scenes of distress, for the purpose of alleviation; and the various inquiries which arose from the efforts of Mr. Howard, tended not only to soften the evils of poverty, but to diminish concomitant evils, and to prevent the frequency of infectious distempers, which were before so prevalent, from the squalid and noxious atmosphere of mismanaged gaols.

Libels:

SOME proceedings on an inclosure bill gave rise to a libel, which was severely prosecuted by the commons. Several petitions, it seems, had been presented against the inclosure in question; and the attention bestowed upon these by the speaker, had not satisfied the advocates of the bill. A most virulent letter was immediately printed in the Public Advertiser, charging sir Fletcher Norton with gross partiality. The commons not only acquitted their speaker of the accusation, but voted the letter a false, scandalous, and malicious libel, contrary to all law and justice, and an open violation of their privileges. The printer being summoned, threw himself upon the mercy of the house. He declared that he had received the letter from Mr. Horne; that it had been published in the hurry of business; and, as he had never before offended the house, he expressed his hopes for its compassion. On inquiry it was found, that Mr. Horne was the reverend Mr. John Horne, clergyman of Brentford. It was moved, that Mr. Woodfall, the printer should be committed to

the custody of the serjeant at arms; and Mr. Charles Fox, ardent in enmity to the licentiousness of the press, friendly as he has ever shown himself to its liberty, proposed that Newgate should be the scene of confinement: the more gentle motion, however, was carried. Mr. Horne was next summoned, but eluded the order, by pretending not to consider himself as the person to whom it was addressed. The next day being taken into custody, Mr. Horne pleaded not guilty. The only evidence against him being Mr. Woodfall, who was thought to be incompetent because he was himself in custody and a party, Mr. Horne was discharged. Mr. Fox the same day complained of a letter in the Morning Chronicle, as a libel on the constitution and the royal family; and, at his instance, directions were given for prosecuting the printer.

THE supplies proposed for this year caused great debates: opposition alleged, that the number of forces, twenty thousand for the fleet, and eighteen thousand for the army, was greater than a peace establishment required, and the expenses being in several articles, and upon the whole, higher than usual, produced loud complaint and severe censure from opposition. The minister admitted the expenditure to be great, but insisted that it arose from circumstances which he could not prevent, *and, for the future, he was confident he would be able to lessen the expenditure.*

THE house of lords this session, in its judicial capacity, determined the great question of literary property, which was brought before them by an appeal from a decree in chancery. The present age, in this country, favourable to every species of meritorious and beneficial industry, has been peculiarly advantageous to literary ability. In former times, when the circulation of learned productions was confined, and the number of readers small, genius often lay buried in obscurity, and merit was not sufficient, without a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, to ensure protection and support: the most successful adventures could receive no other recompense than the patronage of the great, and at best could only enjoy a precarious and irksome dependence. Since the art of printing has rendered the multiplication of copies easy, and the progress of science and erudition has introduced a taste for reading

Literary property is ascertained by a decision of the house of peers.

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among numerous classes of people, authors have had it in their power to repay themselves for their labours, without the humiliating idea of receiving a donative. But the degree in which they were to reap this benefit, depended on the security and the duration of their literary property. The protection afforded by the laws of the country to this species of labour, is not only important to the author, but also to the public; for literary works, like all others, will be undertaken and pursued with greater spirit, when, to the motives of public utility and fame, is added the inducement of private emolument.

THE occasion which brought this question before the public was as follows: certain booksellers had supposed, that an author possessed by common law an exclusive right forever to the publication of his own works, and consequently could transfer that right. On this supposition, some of them had purchased copy-rights, and had prosecuted others who published the same books, as invaders of an exclusive right which they had acquired by purchase. A decree of chancery had been obtained in favour of Mr. Becket, a prosecutor on these grounds, against Messrs. Donaldsons, as pirates, in having published a work belonging to Mr. Becket. The defendants had appealed to the house of peers; and the question rested principally on three points: 1st. Whether the author of a book, or literary composition, has a common law right to the sole and exclusive publication of such book, or literary composition? 2d, Whether an action for a violation of common law right, will lie against those persons who publish the book or literary composition of an author without his consent? and, 3d, How far the statute of the 8th of queen Anne affects the supposition of a common law right? Under the first head, it was contended by the advocates of perpetual literary property, that this right was founded in the general principle by which every man is entitled to the fruits of his own labour. Whoever by the exertion of his rational powers has produced an original work, appears to have a clear right to dispose of the identical work as he pleases; and any attempt to vary the disposition, seems an invasion of that right. The identity of a literary composition consists entirely in the sentiment and language: the same conceptions, clothed in the

same words, must necessarily be the same composition; and whatever method be taken of exhibiting that composition to the ear or the eye of another, by recital, by writing, or by printing, in any number of copies, or at any period of time, it is always the identical work of the author which is so exhibited. On these grounds of natural justice it was contended, that common law respecting literary property was founded, and by that common law the right of an author or his assignee was perpetual. A statute of queen Anne had declared an author and his assigns to have a right to a work for fourteen years, and for fourteen years more if the author should so long live. Certain judges, among whom was lord Kaimes in the court of session,^l and Yates^m in London, denied that ever such a right existed at common law. This opinion they founded on the following allegations: that a literary composition is in the sole dominion of the author while it is in manuscript; the manuscript is the object only of his own labour, and is capable of a sole right of possession; but this is not the case with respect to his ideas. *No possession can be taken, or any act of occupancy asserted, on mere ideas.* If an author have a property in his ideas, it must be from the time when they occur to him; therefore, if another man should afterwards have the same ideas, he must not presume to publish them, because they were preoccupied, and become private property. Lord Mansfield showed the fallacy of the maxim, that nothing but corporeal substance can be an object of property; reputation, though no corporeal substance, was property, and a violation thereof was entitled to damages. Every man's ideas are doubtless his own, and not the less so because another person may have happened to fall into the same train of thinking with himself: but this is not the property which an author claims; it is a property in his literary composition, the identity of which consists in the same thoughts, ranged in the same order, and expressed in the same words. This illustrious judge conceived a common law right to the copy of his work to be vested in an author and his assigns originally,

^l On a different case, but the same general principle, and in which Donaldson was also defendant, a little before the decree of chancery.

^m In the case of Andrew Millar plaintiff, charging Robert Taylor defendant, with publishing and selling copies of Thomson's Seasons, of which Millar alleged himself to be sole proprietor.

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and still to exist, notwithstanding the statute of queen Anne. It was agreeable to the principles of right and wrong, convenience and policy, and therefore to the common law. The court of chancery, proceeding upon its conception of moral justice and general equity, had uniformly decreed that this, like every other species of property, was perpetual to the original acquirer, his heirs, assigns, or others to whom it might be transferred by gift, sale, or any other means of transmission. Lord Camden did not contest the conformity to natural justice of either lord Mansfield's principle or the chancery decrees, nor undertake to prove that there was any reason in the nature of literary productions for rendering the property of these less durable than that of other fruits of labour, but confined himself to what he apprehended to be the written law of the land. The statute of queen Anne, he affirmed, took away any right at common law for an author's multiplying copies exclusively forever, if such right ever existed.

THE house of peers concurred in his opinion, the decree was reversed, and thenceforth literary property depends on the statute of the 8th of queen Anne, which secures to the author or his assigns an exclusive property for fourteen years, and fourteen years after the expiration of that period if he so long live; but, on the expiration of the one or both of these terms, ordains the copy right to be at an end.

ON the 22d of June, was concluded a session of parliament, as important as any that had occurred since the revolution. Changes of great magnitude had been effected in certain colonies, which placed them on a footing totally different from the other British dominions. Civil and political right had been annihilated, and arbitrary power had been established over a considerable part of North America. From those measures, ministers and their supporters, both in and out of parliament, entertained the most sanguine expectations that submission would be immediate, and that complete obedience and tranquillity would be established with permanent security; while, on the other hand, their opponents apprehended, from the system which they were pursuing, more bitter discontent, and more obstinate resistance, than any that had been exhibited in the former dissensions.

CHAP. XIII.

Continental affairs.—Progress and conclusion of the war between Russia and Turkey—terms of peace—motives of Catharine.—Poland.—Views of Prussia and Austria.—France.—Death of Lewis XV.—character;—tost of his favourites, he did not discern the commencing changes of public opinion.—Promising beginnings of Lewis XVI.—Spain deprives the inquisition of its most terrible powers.—America.—Effects of the Boston port bill—ferment through the provinces—communicates to other colonies.—Resolutions of the provincial assemblies—general concert proposed—solemn league and covenant.—A general congress meets at Philadelphia—approves of the conduct of Massachusetts, and promises support—declares principles and object of association.—Declaration of rights—of grievances, and proposed redress.—Petition to the king.—Address to the people of Britain.—Of Canada.—Remonstrance to general Gage.—Address to the colonies.—Meeting breaks up.—General spirit of the colonial proceedings.—Military preparations.—Massachusetts Bay the great hinge of peace and war—contention with the governor—forms a provincial congress, which assumes the supreme power.

IN continental Europe, the Russians and Turks still continuing their bloody war, occupied the chief attention of their neighbours. Vigorous preparations were made on both sides; Catharine, from the superiority which she had manifested during the greater part of the war, expected that success must ultimately attend her armies when powerfully reinforced; while the Turks, elated with the advantage of the preceding campaign, and farther encouraged by the success of the rebellion in the eastern and southern provinces of Russia under Pugatcheff, hoped by military exertions to regain what they had lost. The

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Porte excited the Tartars to join the Russian rebels, in order to increase the disturbances of Russia on that side, while the Turkish force should be concentrated against their main army on the Danube. In the beginning of this year, the death of the emperor Mustapha produced a change in the disposition and conduct of the army. Considering his son Selim, then in the thirteenth year of his age, as too young to sustain the reins of government in so critical a situation of affairs, he appointed his brother Abdulhamet to succeed him on the throne. Some of the Janizaries were dissatisfied with the succession of the late sultan's brother, wishing Selim to be placed immediately on his father's throne; and, as these troops influenced the whole Turkish army, their dissensions created parties among the rest of the forces. A very great army, however, was levied, consisting (when they arrived at the Danube) of two hundred thousand men. Marshal Romanzow was posted on the other side of the river, with about eighty thousand soldiers. After a considerable opposition, Romanzow crossed the river, and Bulgaria again became the scene of war. A severe engagement took place between general Satioff at the head of a detachment of Russians, and a body of Turks, in which the former with much difficulty kept the field. On the 20th of June, generals Kaminshi and Suwarrow encountered the Reis Effendi, who was at the head of forty thousand men; but both the cavalry and infantry of the Turks deserted their colours and camp, without striking a blow. From this time the Ottomans were in every quarter seized with a dismay that made them absolutely refuse to face the enemy; and, in fine, they mutinied against their own leaders. They plundered the baggage, robbed and murdered their officers, disbanded themselves, and pillaged their own country all the way to Constantinople. The grand camp under the vizier was deserted, and his immense army crumbled away to an inconsiderable number. Marshal Romanzoff, not failing to take advantage of this dreadful situation of the enemy, cut off all communication between them, their magazines, and the capital. The Turkish leaders had now no alternative, but to sue for peace on such terms as the conqueror should dictate. The condi-

tions were, the cession of Asoph, Kinbrun, and Janikala to the Russians ; the free navigation of the Propontis, Euxine, and Archipelago ; the independence of the Crimea ; and the sum of 4,500,000 rubles^a, as an indemnification for the expense of the war. So moderate were these terms, that they were little more than what Russia had demanded while the Turkish armies were entire. Did we consider Russia merely in relation to her enemy, we might be surprised that she did not impose harder conditions on a foe that had given her great disturbance, had actually been the aggressor, and was now at her mercy ; but, on viewing her situation, both internally and relatively to other powers, we must be convinced that she was guided by sound policy. There were two powerful parties at the court of Petersburg, one headed by count Panin, and the other by count Orloff : the former had recommended peace on moderate terms ; the latter, the continuance of the war, unless the enemy yielded to the conditions which Russia chose to dictate. Catharine, who found it her interest to observe a neutrality between the two parties, both of which she knew to be zealously attached to her own government, had now an opportunity of gratifying them both ; the one by concluding peace, the other by imposing the terms. The rebel Pugatcheff, a man of great abilities, intrepid courage, and rapid enterprise, was becoming daily more formidable. Her treasure was nearly exhausted by the expenses of the war, and the improvement of her extensive dominions was greatly interrupted. The Poles were in many places in a state of insurrection, especially in her part of the divided territories ; and combinations were forming for a more general assertion of their rights. Austria, although she agreed in the partition of Poland, was not by her recent share of spoils lulled to a forgetfulness of the dangers which might accrue to her from her partners in the plunder. She still regarded with the most vigilant jealousy the progress of the Russian arms so near her frontiers. The king of Prussia himself, closely connected as he was with the czarina, by no means desired her aggrandizement where he could not come in

^a At 4s. 6d.

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for a share of the accession. The more southern powers she well knew to be very much inclined to oppose her and her advances; her ally, Great Britain, was fully occupied with her own internal and colonial affairs. For all these reasons, it was the interest of Catharine to conclude a peace on the terms which she proposed; and she soon reaped the advantage of her policy, by being enabled to vanquish the Polish insurgents, to crush intestine revolt, and bestow a less divided attention on improving her immense dominions in various constituents of national prosperity.

France.

Death of
Lewis XV.
Character.

IN France an event took place this year, which caused a great change in the internal policy of that country. On the 10th of May, Lewis XV. died, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the fifty-ninth of his reign. This king, who possessed very moderate talents, was educated in the ignorance so general among arbitrary princes in long established governments, where little personal effort is necessary to maintain a slavery confirmed by prescription, and in that luxury which had so long prevailed at the court of France. Of a pleasing figure, he acquired those exterior accomplishments and light graces which the joint vivacity and frivolity of fashionable France were so well fitted for bestowing. He was in one sense a man of good dispositions, for he was mild and compassionate, unless driven to be otherwise by the impulse of his counsellors. He did not exercise tyranny from inclination and choice, but often permitted it from imbecility. Having neither vigour of understanding nor firmness of mind for governing himself, he was through life the pupil of others. Always in a state of intellectual minority, the administration of his affairs was wise or foolish, good or bad, according to the character of those who happened to be his guardians. Thus, during the ministry of cardinal Fleury, his policy was pacific; afterwards aggressively warlike and ambitious; and in the latter period of his life, he was again pacific. Under some ministers, he was moderate in his internal government; under others, he was despotic. When priests presided in his cabinet, he was the tool of clerical encroachment; when deists took the direction, he was the agent of irreligion, by weakening the venera-

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The tool
of his fa-
vourites,

he did
discern the
commenc-
ing change
of public
opinion.

Promising
beginning
of Lewis
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tion of his people for the institutions of the church. His violent proceedings against the parliaments arose not from the violence, but from the weakness, of his character ; he was then under the tutelage of tyrannical ministers. A reign of near sixty years bears no stamp of uniformity of character. His principles, sentiments, and conduct, varied with the success of changes of his ministers and mistresses. Lewis XV. was nominally, but not really, the sovereign of France : for civil, military, and political operations, for every department of government, we find the real sovereigns in the royal favourites. Lewis was, however, sufficiently qualified for being a mere pageant of state, and going through the forms of sovereignty in the paralysed stillness of undisputed despotism ; he was therefore very fit for sitting on a throne so much adored as it had been in the reign of his predecessor, and as it was during a great part of his own. Toward the close, a spirit manifested itself which required a prince of a different character to manage ; and though its operations were checked, yet the repression was only temporary, and the very means employed to stop its progress, gave it ultimately an augmented force. Lewis was succeeded by his grandson, who ascended the throne by the title of Lewis XVI. This prince, long distinguished for amiableness of disposition, was extremely popular. On his accession to the throne, he showed himself sensible that a change was taking place in the national sentiments, and that it was the wisest policy in a king to accommodate his administration to such a change. He therefore annulled the unpopular measures of the late reign, set about restoring the ancient parliaments, and promoted popular men to various offices ; at the same time however, he circumscribed the pretensions of the parliaments, granting them only their established functions, without suffering them to make those encroachments on kingly prerogative, which, guided in some instances more by the principles of liberty than by prevailing usage, they had attempted during the latter years of his grandfather. He had not, indeed, changed the ministry, but he had changed the counsels. The nation, delighted with the restoration of parliaments and the other popular acts of their monarch, overlooked the cir-

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Spain de-
prives the
inquisition
of its most
terrible
powers.

cumscriptions ; and as the king appeared to make the happiness of his people the rule of his conduct, he was regarded by them with the warmest affection : such was the first prospect of the reign of Lewis the sixteenth.

THE king of Spain was at this time engaged in a war with the emperor of Morocco, which was carried on in desultory hostilities for several years with very little success. This year, however, is remarkable in Spain ; for in it that tremendous instrument of superstition and tyranny, the inquisition, was deprived of its most formidable powers. The court of Madrid, intent on the promotion of manufactures and commerce, and aware of the obstruction which they received from the dread of such an intolerant tribunal, took from it its jurisdictions and its prisons, and rendered it little more than a convocation for religious discussion.

HAVING narrated the measures pursued concerning America, and stated the effects which they were expected to produce, our history now proceeds to their actual consequences.

America.

Effects of
the Boston
port bill.

IN the month of May the intelligence arrived at Boston, of the act passed by the British parliament for shutting up the port. This information, together with a copy of the act, was immediately published on a paper with a black border, symbolical of mourning, and hawked about the streets as a barbarous and bloody murder of rights and liberties. The fatal news was wholly unexpected, and the consternation which it caused among all orders of people was inexpressible ; and nothing was to be heard from the Bostonians, but frantic expressions of rage and resentment against the tyranny and inhumanity of the British ministry and parliament ; vengeance was loudly demanded and threatened.° They lost little time in general exclamations and menaces, but proceeded to consider what could be done for redress : a town meeting was held, resolutions were proposed and adopted, which, after expatiating on the impolicy, injustice, and cruelty of the act, and appealing from it to God and to man, addressed themselves particularly to the other colonies, and invited them to enter into an

Ferment
through
the provin-
ces.

agreement to stop all imports and exports to and from Britain and Ireland, and every part of the West Indies, until the act should be repealed ; the only measure (they said) that was left for the salvation of North America and her liberties. These resolutions were transmitted with great expedition to the rest of the provinces, and copies of the act were multiplied and despatched to every part of the continent with wonderful celerity ; which, like the torch of the fury, set in a flame the countries through which they passed : in the several colonies great bodies of the people were called together by public advertisement, and the odious law was burned with awful solemnity. Meanwhile general Gage arrived in his government at Boston : this officer being personally known there, as well as in other parts of America, was much beloved and highly respected ; he was, besides, successor to a very unpopular governor. These circumstances, however, which would have been so auspicious to his entrance upon government had affairs been in a tranquil state, were now counteracted by the prevalent rage against Britain. The assembly met ; and he informed them, that on the 1st of June they were to remove to Salem, which was thenceforward to be the seat of the provincial government. The assembly, not pleased with this intimation, petitioned him to appoint a day for a general fast and prayer ; but he declined compliance, and soon afterwards adjourned the session to the 7th of June, appointing Salem to be the place of meeting.

THE other colonies having received copies of the act, and of the Bostonian addresses, resolved to support the cause which they considered as their own. However much the middle and southern colonies had, on general principles of government, differed from their northern neighbours, they agreed in repugnance to taxation. On that ground they had all resisted the import of tea, and thus had shared in the alleged criminality of Boston. Though some were more temperate than others, they all concurred in expressing the greatest disapprobation of the measures pursued by the British government, an abhorrence of the new act, a condemnation of the principles on which it was founded, and a resolution to oppose its effects, and support their brethren who were to be its im-

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Communi-
cate with
the other
colonies.

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Resolutions
of the pro-
vincial
assemblies.General
concert
proposed.

mediate victims. Indeed, if ministry had formed a design of driving the Americans into confederation, they could not have devised more effectual means, than by punishing and disfranchising one colony, because unknown persons in it had been guilty of an outrage that sprung from resistance to an impost which all the colonies reprobated. The assembly of Virginia, which was sitting at the time when the despatches from Boston arrived, set the example: in that meeting a resolution was passed, for appointing the 1st of June, the day on which the Boston port bill was to take effect, to be set apart as a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation, "to implore the divine interposition to avert the heavy calamity which threatened destruction to their rights, with all the evils of a civil war, and to give one heart and one mind to the people, firmly to oppose every injury to American liberties." Informed of the resolution, and of the general spirit of the assembly, the earl of Dunmore determined to dissolve that body; but the members held a private meeting, in which they drew up a declaration, setting forth, that the punishment about to be inflicted on the inhabitants of Boston, in order to compel *them to submit* to the PAYMENT OF UNCONSTITUTIONAL TAXES, was in truth an attack on all the colonies, and would ultimately prove destructive to American rights and liberties, unless their united wisdom should be applied to prevent its operation and effects. They therefore recommended to the committee of correspondence, to propose to the committees of the other colonies, that an annual congress should be held for all the colonies, to deliberate on such general measures as the common interest of America might from time to time require. Virginia had always been distinguished for loyalty and attachment to the British constitution; and in its present proposition to combine against acts of government, it declared itself to be determined by constitutional principles. At Philadelphia, three hundred of the inhabitants assembling, appointed a committee to write to Boston. In a letter; temperate yet firm, they recommended that lenient measures should be tried before they had recourse to extremities; and that commerce with Britain should not entirely be discontinued until all measures

had failed. If, by satisfying the East India company for the teas, they could terminate the unhappy controversy, and leave to the Bostonians their ancient constitutional liberty, there could be no doubt what part wisdom would dictate. But the matter in consideration was not now the value of the tea, it was the indefeasible right of giving or withholding their own money, a right from which they could never recede. At New York, though moderate and temperate in its conduct, one resolution of a contrary kind was carried in a town meeting ; this was, to prevent the prosecution in the provincial courts, of any debts owing by inhabitants to Britain. This resolution, however, was neither adopted nor confirmed by the provincial assembly held soon after, nor was it any where carried into practice. In general, the proposals for a total interruption of commerce, were by no means favourably received, but considered as the last deplorable resort when every other expedient should prove ineffectual. The middle and southern colonies were at that time evidently desirous of avoiding a rupture with Britain. On the other hand, all the colonies concurred in a resolution to resist taxation, and to hold a general congress ; and in the mean time they made very liberal contributions for the relief of the Bostonians. While the Boston port bill was producing an effect so very opposite to that which its framers and supporters expected and intended, copies arrived in Massachusetts Bay of the other two bills for altering the the constitution of that province. The opposition to government now became more vehement through the colonies. Concerning the Boston port bill, the other provinces had not taken their tone from Massachusetts Bay, but had resolved to support the cause on the principles of the British constitution. The Massachusetts colonists had then applied to their neighbours as suppliants ; and somewhat doubtful of the reception that they should meet, had cautiously abstained from promulgating doctrines and sentiments which might shock the loyalty and constitutional principles of their southern brethren. Assured of the cooperation of the other colonies in resisting taxes, and trusting that the concert might be more extensive, they

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Solemn
league and
covenant.

now took a lead ; and henceforward the deliberations of the whole most frequently bore the stamp of New England republicanism. The colonists of Massachusetts now determined to carry to the utmost extremity their resistance to the British government. By the suggestion of the provincial assembly, an association was framed, the subscribers to which most solemnly bound themselves to break off all commercial intercourse with Great Britain from the last day of the month of August, until the Boston port bill, and the other obnoxious acts of parliament, should be repealed, and the colony restored to the exercise of its chartered rights ; to renounce all dealings with those who should refuse to enter into this agreement ; or who, having engaged, should afterwards violate their compact. To sanction the whole, a resolution was added, that the names of delinquents should be published in the newspapers as enemies to their country^p. To this agreement they gave the memorable title of the SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT ; which, having been a name affixed in the last century to an engagement inimical to the church and monarchy, afforded some indication of the views which they entertained, and the lengths to which they were disposed to proceed. In most of the colonies, there were three classes of political opinions ; the first, of those, who resolved to resist taxation, and advised the most violent measures to be immediately adopted ; secondly, of those persons who, equally determined to oppose British imposts, were more cautious and temperate, and who wished to try the effect of conciliatory propositions, before they resorted to the extremity of resistance ; the third consisted of approvers of the British system and acts. This third set was small in number, and of no weight in the colonial deliberations. The second, in the beginning, predominated in most of the other colonies ; the first was paramount in Massachusetts Bay, where there evidently prevailed, not merely a disposition to resist acts on the ground of incompatibility with the rights of British subjects, but of contrariety to their conception of republican freedom.

^p See Stedman, and Ramsay.

GENERAL GAGE, to counteract the covenant, issued a proclamation, which declared it illegal and traitorous, contrary to the allegiance due to the king, and subversive of the authority of parliament; and cautioned the people against giving any countenance to that engagement, under the penalties annexed to such heinous offences. This act was far from producing the desired effect, by deterring the colonists from the combination. Popular writers found in it a theme for the display of ingenuity and legal knowledge, in showing that the governor, by calling that association traitorous, assumed a power not claimed by the king himself, of making that conduct treason, which was not ordained to be treason by the laws, and thus rendering the declared will of one of the king's officers, equivalent to an act of the legislature. General Gage, perceiving the sentiments and intentions of the people of Massachusetts to be so unfavourable to the British government, as to require, for their repression, more powerful restraints than proclamations, ordered some regiments of foot, with a detachment of artillery, to be sent to Boston. These, upon their arrival, were encamped on a common between the isthmus^q called Boston-neck, which joins the peninsula of Boston to the continent, and the town itself. The professed intention of the governor was, to prevent desertion, then very much encouraged by the provincials; but this disposition of the troops was construed to be designed for the purpose of blocking up the town, and compelling it by famine to submit to any terms which might be imposed. The inhabitants of the adjacent country assured the Bostonians, that several thousands of armed men were ready to assist them, should their aid be necessary.

In August, commissions arrived for those who were intended to constitute the new council, by the act for altering the constitution of Massachusetts. Of thirty-six, twenty-four only accepted the commissions; and against those the rage of the people was so great, that all but a few who resided in Boston, and were protected by the troops to save their property and lives, resigned their ap-

^q The readers may perhaps not recollect, that Boston is situated in a peninsula. This geographical fact, however, is very necessary to be attended to in the course of the history.

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pointments. So many obstructions, indeed, occurred in every department, that civil government was entirely dissolved; whoever rendered himself odious, by discovering his attachment to the mother country, and a wish to submit to her laws, was insulted by the populace; and many, hunted from their dwellings in the country, were obliged to take refuge in Boston. Arms were provided, ammunition and warlike stores began to be collected, and the young men were employed in training themselves to military discipline. Perceiving such appearances of hostile intention, general Gage ordered all the military stores which were deposited in the several magazines through the provinces, to be brought to Boston. The colonists, apprehending from this measure that he meant to commence hostilities, several thousands of militia marched toward Boston: finding that none had been attempted, they retired; but the general thought it expedient to fortify Boston-neck against future attacks. The colonists of Massachusetts now began to make vigorous preparations for a forcible resistance to the British government; associations were formed for promoting the knowledge of military discipline, and the use of arms; resolutions were passed for holding a provincial congress, which, without any regard to the governor, should be considered as the legislature of the colony. They even remonstrated on the raising fortifications, and the seizure of the public magazines; thus interfering with the executive authority of the crown. They declared, that should any person be seized for supporting the cause of the colonies, they would retaliate upon every British officer whom they could find; and, lastly, they recommended to the receivers of the public revenue, to keep it in their own hands, until the constitution of the province was restored, or until it should be otherwise disposed of by a provincial convention.

THOUGH the other colonies did not proceed to such extremities, nor make any preparations for war, yet all, except Georgia, concurred in resolving to hold a congress, and not submit to the payment of any internal taxes that were not imposed by their own assemblies; and to suspend all commerce with the mother country, until the American grievances in general, and those of Massachu-

setts Bay in particular, should be fully redressed. In the proceedings of the congress, instructed by the respective colonies, we fully see the dispositions and views of the Americans.

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THE attention of all parties was now turned to the general congress, which, on the 5th of September, met at Philadelphia, as a central situation. The congress consisted of fifty-one delegates, representing twelve of the colonies lying along the shore of the Atlantic, from Newhampshire to South Carolina inclusive: the greatest number of delegates of any one colony being seven, and the smallest two. But this disparity in the number of delegates did not affect the votes; as it was agreed that each colony should have but one vote, whatever was its number of delegates. The delegates received their instruction from their constituents; some of these violent, and some moderate; but all uniting in condemning the Boston port bill, and the other acts of the last session of parliament, relating to Massachusetts Bay, and in denying the right of the British parliament to tax the colonies. But the most material of their instructions, and what in a great measure superseded the use of all others, was a power given to their delegates to agree to whatever measures should meet with the concurrence of a majority of the congress.^v The congress sat with their doors locked; no one was permitted to be present at their deliberations; and all their proceedings, except those which they thought fit to publish, were kept profoundly secret. Assembled, says captain Stedman, in the cause of freedom, they nevertheless thought fit to observe a form practised only in the most despotic governments. Their proceedings being wrapped up in mystery, and all the intermediate steps leading to a conclusion being hidden from the public eye, their decrees, when promulgated, were received, like the oracles of ancient times, as the dictates of profound wisdom.

Meeting of
a general
congress at
Philadel-
phia.

THE first public act of the congress was, a declaratory resolution manifesting their disposition with respect to the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and immediately intended to confirm and encourage that people. They expressed

^v See Stedman.

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approves of
the con-
duct of
Massachu-
setts, and
promises
support ;

their sympathy with the sufferings of their countrymen in that province, under the operation of the late unjust, oppressive, and cruel acts of the British parliament ; they thoroughly approved of the wisdom and fortitude with which the opposition to these ministerial measures had hitherto been conducted, and declared that contributions for alleviating the distress of their brethren at Boston, should be continued as long as their exigencies required relief. They further declared that, if the British government attempted to carry the acts complained of into execution by force, all America should combine in opposing that force. They recommended to the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay, that as justice could be no longer legally administered by the late acts, they should submit to its suspension until they were repealed ; and that every person who should judge or act under any commission or authority derived from the late act of parliament changing the form of government, and violating the charter of that province, ought to be held in detestation, and considered as the wicked tool of a despotism, which prepared to destroy the rights that God, nature, and compact had conferred on America. They passed a resolution, declaring that the transportation of any person for the trial of offences committed in America, justified and ought to produce resistance and reprisals.^s

declares
the princi-
ples and
objects of
association.

THE congress also proceeded to declare the principles and objects of their association. They avowed their allegiance to his majesty, their affection to Britain, their dependence upon her, and the benefits and favours which they had received from the parent state. In the most explicit terms, they disclaimed any wish of separating from the mother country ; but at the same time they declared themselves entitled to a participation of all the rights and privileges of British freeborn subjects ; that the present grievances and distresses arose from a ruinous system of colonial administration, adopted by the British ministry about the year 1763, and evidently calculated for enslaving these colonies, and with them the British empire. Thence had arisen the acts for taxing America, and for depriving

Statement
of alleged
grievances,

American subjects of the constitutional trial by juries; thence the late cruel, oppressive, and unconstitutional plans concerning Boston and the whole province; and the plan of extending Canada, establishing an arbitrary government, and discouraging the settlements of British subjects in that country, and disposing and enabling the established inhabitants to act with hostility against the freedom of the protestant colonies. To obtain redress for these grievances, they thought that the best, most effectual, and peaceable measure would be, to abstain from every species of commercial intercourse with Britain, until that redress should be obtained by a repeal of all the coercive acts. On the one hand, they specified the various articles of merchandise in which they had dealt with Britain, and which they now combined to refuse; on the other, they enumerated the various acts, or clauses of acts, of which they required the repeal. The amount of their requisition was, the reversal of the whole ministerial system pursued since 1763. They afterwards agreed to petition the king, and accordingly framed a representation to his majesty. Perhaps subjects never offered to their sovereign an address consisting of stronger and more comprehensive reasoning, with more impressive eloquence: it stated every important act since the change of system in 1764; its peculiar features, its general principles, and its connexion with other acts: it exhibited the whole plan of recent and present government, with the actual and probable consequences: the petitioners declared the warmest attachment and the highest veneration for the king and the constitution; they wanted no new privileges, but merely prayed to be restored to their former rights, which other British subjects still enjoyed: we ask (they said) but for peace, liberty, and safety; we wish not a diminution of the prerogative; we do not solicit the grant of any new right in our favour; your royal authority over us, and our connexion with Great Britain, we shall always carefully and zealously endeavour to support and maintain. The peroration very happily united the respectful deference of loyalty with the temperate firmness of freedom. "Permit us then, most gracious sovereign, in the name of all your

and proposed
means of
redress;

petition
the king.

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“ faithful people in America, with the utmost humility to
 “ implore you, for the honour of Almighty God, whose
 “ pure religion our enemies are undermining; for your
 “ glory, which can be advanced only by rendering your
 “ subjects happy, and keeping them united; for the inte-
 “ rests of your family, *depending on an adherence to the*
 “ *principles that enthroned it*; for the safety and welfare
 “ of your kingdoms and dominions, threatened with
 “ almost unavoidable dangers and distresses; that your
 “ majesty, as the loving father of your whole people, con-
 “ nected by the same bonds of law, loyalty, faith, and
 “ blood, though dwelling in various countries, will not suf-
 “ fer the transcendent relation formed by these ties, to be
 “ further violated, in uncertain expectation of effects,
 “ which, if attained, never can compensate *for the calami-*
 “ *ties through which they must be gained*. We therefore
 “ most earnestly beseech your majesty, that your royal
 “ authority and interposition may be used for our relief;
 “ and that a gracious answer may be given to this petition:
 “ that your majesty may enjoy every felicity through a
 “ long and glorious reign over loyal and happy subjects,
 “ and that your descendants may inherit your property and
 “ dominions till time shall be no more, is, and always will
 “ be, our sincere and fervent prayer.”—The petition was
 subscribed by all the fifty-one delegates.

Address to
the people
of Britain.

AN address was then framed to the people of Great Britain, which was also a very masterly composition: it stated, that the Americans, sprung from the same ancestors as the Britons, entertained the same sentiments and principles which had produced and supported the British constitution, and considered themselves entitled to equal rights with other British subjects.—“ We consider our-
 “ selves, and do insist, that we are, and ought to be,
 “ as free as our fellow-subjects in Britain; and that no
 “ power on earth has a right to take our property from us
 “ without our consent. We claim all the benefits secured
 “ to the subject by the English constitution, and particu-
 “ larly that inestimable one of the trial by jury. We
 “ hold it essential to English liberty, that no man be con-
 “ demned unheard, or punished for supposed offences,
 “ without having an opportunity of making his defence.”

Having detailed the various grievances which they alleged themselves to have suffered, they endeavoured to show, that the people of England had in the last century contended with their kings for the preservation of the same rights which the Americans were now deprived of by a British parliament. . . They insisted, that the oppression was essentially the same, although the oppressors were changed. But not altogether relying on the efficacy of this appeal to the justice of the nation, the address endeavoured to gain it over to the cause of America, by representing, that the certain consequences of unconditional submission being exacted from her, would be the subversion of the constitution of the mother country, by the tyrannical aristocracy which was engrafted on the power of the crown. They expressed deep regret at being obliged to adopt measures detrimental in their consequences to numbers of their fellow-subjects in Great Britain and Ireland; but they hoped, that the magnanimity and justice of the British nation, would furnish a parliament of such wisdom, independence, and public spirit, as might save the violated rights of the whole empire from the devices of *wicked ministers* and *evil counsellors*, whether in or out of office; and thereby restore that harmony, friendship, and fraternal affection, between all the inhabitants of his majesty's kingdoms and territories, so ardently wished for by every true and honest American. Their several addresses were indeed particularly well adapted to the temper and passions of the parties whom they endeavoured to gain. They also addressed the inhabitants of Canada; described with great eloquence the blessings of a free constitution, and the advantages which the Canadians might have reaped from the enjoyment of such a system. Ministers had, they said, kept those new subjects of Britain ignorant of its advantages; they therefore undertook to explain them to the Canadian French, and endeavoured to excite the indignation of that province against the late acts, as precluding them from the freedom which, in their new relation as British subjects, they ought to enjoy. They paid high compliments to their countryman Montesquieu; and having endeavoured to show that the new plan of governing Canada was most disgraceful to its subjects

They address the colonies.

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and injurious to its rights, they quoted his sentiments delivered in a chapter on the British constitution; from which they inferred, that this great political philosopher would have deemed the Canadians to be in a state of slavery. They concluded with strenuously inviting them to join in the league of the colonies. The congress likewise published a declaration of rights and grievances. This paper contained a summary of all the privileges appertaining to British subjects; to the free exercise of these they were, they contended, entitled by the immutable laws of nature, by the British constitution, and by their several charters. All former distinctions between legislation and impost, between external and internal taxes, were now laid aside. They claimed, on behalf of the colonies, the sole and exclusive privilege of legislating for themselves in all cases whatsoever; but, from the mere necessity of circumstances, were willing to submit to such acts of parliament as were *bona fide* intended to regulate their foreign commerce; excluding, however, all ideas of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue from the people of the colonies without their own consent. Their grievances (they said) arose from eleven acts of parliament passed in the present reign; but the most intolerable resulted from the three acts of the last session of parliament, respecting the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and the law for extending the limits of Canada. They wrote a letter to general Gage, declaring it to be the fixed and unalterable resolution of all the colonies to unite for the preservation of their common rights, in opposition to the late acts of parliament, and in support of their brethren of Massachusetts Bay. They remonstrated against his military proceedings, bearing (they said) a hostile appearance, which even the tyrannical acts did not warrant. They requested that he would discontinue the fortifications, and give orders that the intercourse between the town and country should be uninterrupted: they addressed the colonies, declaring that, upon impartially examining the conduct of the British government in North America from 1763, they found that all the disturbances had proceeded

Remonstrance to
general
Gage.

Address to
the colo-
nies.

t All these have been successively mentioned, and most of them repeatedly alluded to in the course of the history.

from an unconditional assumption and oppressive acts on the part of Britain. Representing perseverance in union as the only means of security against the arbitrary designs so evident in the conduct of the British ministers, they proceeded to state the trust which was reposed in the congress, and the manner in which they had discharged their duty; that, notwithstanding the series of oppression experienced from Britain, they had made conciliatory advances; and while, inspired by constitutional liberty, they had shown themselves resolved to maintain their rights, guided by loyalty to their king, and affection to their fellow-subjects, they had manifested their earnest desire of preserving peace and amity with their mother country. After the performance of these acts, during a session of fifty-one days, the first general congress of the North American provinces, on the 26th of October, terminated its meeting.

Meeting
breaks up.

THE amount of the reasonings and the spirit of the proceedings, in either partial meetings, provincial assemblies, or the general congress, may be exhibited in few words: "The British system from 1763 has violated the chartered and constitutional rights of us, the British subjects in the American colonies: we will not submit to such usurpation: we will not pay duties unjustly imposed, and we will have no commerce with Britain until the obnoxious acts be repealed. If the British government attempt to enforce its unconstitutional decrees, self-preservation compels us, and our condition enables us, to resist force by force. Yet that extremity we deprecate, as pernicious to both parties: we pray our sovereign and request our fellow-subjects, to co-operate with us in averting so deplorable a calamity. We ask no new privilege; we desire only the restoration of those rights which, until 1763, we enjoyed without interruption." Such were the sentiments and acts of the colonists in North America; such the first consequences of the ministerial system of 1774.

General
spirit of the
colonial
proceed-
ings.

BEFORE the meeting of the general congress, none of the middle or southern colonies had commenced preparations for war; but when that convention broke up, and its members returned to their constituents the other provinces

Military
prepara-
tions.

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became actuated by the spirit of New England. The militia were very frequently assembled for the purpose of discipline ; arms were provided for those who were without them ; and resistance, by open force, to the power of the mother country, was made the subject of common discourse. Soon afterwards a copy arrived of a proclamation issued in England, to prevent warlike stores from being exported : and this prohibition rendered the inhabitants of the colonies more eager to procure supplies of the various kinds of ammunition.

Massachusetts Bay the grand hinge of peace and war.

In consequence of the determination of congress, all the colonies deeply interested themselves in the affairs of Massachusetts Bay ; and upon the transactions in that province, depended more immediately the doubtful issue of peace and war. The governor and council had issued writs for holding a general assembly ; but the events that afterwards took place, and the heat and violence which every where prevailed, made them think it expedient to countermand their writs by a proclamation, and to defer holding the assembly to a season of more security. The election, however, was carried on, without regard to the proclamation ; the new members met at Salem, but the governor did not attend to administer the oaths and open the session. Having waited a day, and neither the governor or any substitute for him arriving, *they voted themselves into a provincial congress*, to be joined by such others as had been or should be elected for that purpose. Mr. Hancock,ⁿ who was offensive to the governor's party, was chosen chairman, and they adjourned to the town of Concord, about twenty miles from Boston. Thence they presented a remonstrance to the governor, on the subject of the fortifications at Boston-neck, and the alarm occasioned by the collection of military force at Boston, tending to endanger the lives, liberty and property, not only of the Bostonians, but of the whole province. The general, though unwilling to return an answer to an illegal assembly, thought it expedient in the present case to overlook

Contention with the governor.

Forms a provincial congress ;

ⁿ This was the same gentleman, the seizure of whose sloop for contraband practices had occasioned an insurrection at Boston in the year 1768 ; and the consequences of which insurrection are supposed by many to have precipitated the dispute between the mother-country and her colonies toward its crisis.

forms. In replying to the provincial congress, he told them, that the lives and liberties of none but avowed enemies of Britain could be in danger from British soldiers, who, notwithstanding the enmity which had been shown to them in withholding what was necessary for their preservation, had not discovered that resentment which might have been expected from such hostile treatment. He reminded them, that while they were complaining of alterations made in their charter, they were themselves subverting it by their present illegal meeting ; and he admonished them to desist from such unconstitutional proceedings. Boston was now become the place of refuge to all the friends of British government. On the approach of winter, the governor thought it necessary to erect temporary barracks for the troops, not only to accommodate his soldiers but to prevent them from being quartered on the inhabitants ; which in the present state and temper of both, might be attended with dangerous consequences. The Bostonians did every thing in their power, without employing open violence, to obstruct the erections. Very great mutual distrust and animosity prevailed between the government and the people. Boston, however, was now the only place in Massachusetts that contained British forces : and from the hostile disposition of the provincials, and the insulated situation which they occupied, their circumstances were not much unlike to those of persons besieged by open enemies. The provincial congress not only continued their sittings, but passed resolutions which, from the disposition and promptitude of the people, had all the weight and efficacy of laws ; their injunctions, under the form of advice, directed the regulation and exercise of the militia, the collection and disposition of the public revenue, and the provision of arms and military stores. Thus they assumed powers of the supreme government ; and in the first provincial congress of Massachusetts, we see, strongly drawn, the outlines of American independence. The governor thought it necessary to issue a proclamation, warning the inhabitants of the province against suffering themselves to be ensnared by the provincial congress, or led by their influence to incur the penalties of sedition and rebellion ; and strictly prohibiting all

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which
assumes
the su-
preme
power.

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his majesty's loyal subjects from paying any regard to the recommendations and resolves of such an unlawful assembly. But the governor's proclamation was treated with contempt, while the requisitions of the provincial congress were obeyed as laws. That assembly appointed another congress to be held in the month of February 1775, and toward the end of November dissolved itself.

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Impression in Britain from the American disputes.—Dissolution of parliament.—General election.—Leading characters in the new parliament.—Meeting of parliament.—king's speech—address—indecision of ministers.—Character and policy of lord North—opinions of his power and efficiency.—Petitions presented from America, and American merchants, to parliament and the king—dismissed without a hearing.—Lord Chatham, though loaded with infirmities, returns to the house—his introductory speech—his plan of conciliation rejected.—Conquest of America conceived by ministers to be easy.—Americans asserted to be all cowards.—Mr. Fox's observations on the inspiring efficacy of liberty.—Parliament declares Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion.—Message from the king, requiring an augmentation of forces.—Bill for prohibiting the New England provinces from commerce and fishery.—Lord North's plan of conciliation—Apprehended by courtiers to concede too much, by opposition to concede too little.—Mr. Fox opposes its inconsistency.—Lord North's policy wavering and irresolute.—Dexterous retreat to satisfy the supporters of coercion.—Mr. Burke's conciliatory plan, on the grounds of expediency—outlines and character—predicts civil and foreign war from the conduct of ministers.—rejected.—Mr. Hartley's conciliatory bill—rejected.—Ministers averse to all conciliatory overtures.—Bill for extending commercial prohibitions.—Loyalty of New York province—representation from it to the commons—dismissed unheard.—Supplies.—Session closes.—War unavoidable.—Literary advocates for and against America.

WHILE the proceedings in and concerning America were so extremely important, they did not, in Britain, appear to attract the attention of the nation in proportion to their magnitude. There were, indeed, po-

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Impression
in Britain
from the
American
disputes.

liticians and philosophers who saw them in their real aspect, and dreaded the consequences; but this view was far from being general: even merchants and manufacturers, to whom a rupture with the colonies would be so calamitous, seemed now lulled into equal security with the rest of their countrymen. This inattention arose from various causes. The contests with the colonies were no longer new, but from the year 1765 they had, with very few and short intermissions, been the chief subjects of parliamentary deliberation. To those who did not minutely and critically examine the new occurrences, and the change of sentiments which were now become so general in North America, most of the topics appeared exhausted; the various arguments for taxation had been often discussed, and on the triteness of the reasoning, great numbers overlooked the new effects which the system was producing. Confederacies against the importation of British commodities had before, and recently, been violated; and the present combinations would, many trusted, be equally short lived. Disputes had been frequently carried to the verge of a rupture, and had been afterwards accommodated; some means of conciliation, they flattered themselves, would be again devised. The Americans would tire of associations, that deprived them of the chief conveniences of life, which were rendered by habit almost necessities; besides, ministers and their adherents had very industriously spread an opinion, that vigorous measures, with perseverance, would soon finish a contest, which nothing but former indulgence had nourished; and also, that the present administration possessed in an eminent degree the qualities requisite for honourably and advantageously terminating the dispute. Ministers, indeed, had afforded no satisfactory proofs either of their vigour or policy; but, as they had not, on the other hand, manifested either feebleness or folly, they and their friends represented the counsellors of his majesty as a body of very uncommon ability. A great part of the nation, with that unsuspecting credulity which frequently distinguishes a people otherwise so eminent for sound judgment, gave administration credit for all the talents and qualities for which they chose to take credit to themselves. For these reasons, it was

not doubted that the coercive system which had been adopted and carried into execution under the direction of such men, would soon intimidate its objects from forcible resistance; but that, if it did not awe them to submission, their reduction would be speedy and certain: supported by the greater part of the country, the cabinet was the more able and determined to proceed with the plan of dictation which had commenced so strongly in the preceding session.

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PARLIAMENT was now in its seventh year. In the reign of George II., it had generally lasted near the whole time; the first parliament of the present king had also continued seven full years. On the 30th of September 1774, about six years and a half from the former election, a proclamation was issued, for the dissolution of parliament, and the convocation of a new one, for which the writs were made returnable on the 9th of the following November. An abridgment contrary to recent custom excited great surprise among those who judged from precedent more than from present circumstances and expediency: but many reasons were assigned for this unusual measure; the most probable appears to be, that, as a new state of things had arisen in America, new councils might be requisite on the part of the legislature. On the one hand, should it be found necessary to deviate from the coercive system, the old parliament might be restrained by a sense of consistency from rescinding its own laws, while a new one would be more at liberty to act according to the exigency of the case. On the other hand, as at present it was determined to persevere in coercion, and the majority of the people appeared to approve, it was probable that a parliament would be returned, favourable to the continuance of that system; and thus government would have an assurance of a long cooperation, of which it might be deprived by a change of circumstances and of public sentiment, were the election deferred till the succeeding year.

Dissolution
of parliament.

In London the opposition party carried the election of all its candidates. In Middlesex, Mr. Wilkes, now lord mayor elect, was chosen to represent the county; and ministers were not so imprudent as again to controvert a seat which had already given government so much dis-

General
election.

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turbance. A considerable change of individual members took place through the nation; but it was soon found, that there was no alteration of political sentiment, and that a great majority supported the ministerial project of coercing America.

THE subjects which were to occupy the deliberations of the new parliament, have rarely been equalled in importance in the legislative history of any age or country. On its counsels was to depend, whether by conciliation we should restore the reciprocally beneficial harmony that had so long subsisted between Britain and her colonies; or, by persistence in coercion, drive such valuable dependencies to a rebellion, which either would not be quelled, or, if crushed, could be reduced only by efforts which must exhaust the parent country, and destroy the provinces that she sought to render more productive and lucrative.

Leading
characters
in the new
parliament.

FOR examining such momentous questions, seldom has a national council contained a greater assemblage of nobility, than the British parliament now exhibited. In the house of commons, among many men of considerable talents and extensive knowledge, there were ranged on the side of ministers, the financial information and accurate results of sir Grey Cooper; the perspicacious detail, solid judgment, and orderly arrangement of sir Gilbert Elliot; and the intrepid confidence and manly boldness of Mr. Rigby. In rising progression, there followed the sound and vigorous understanding, the unremitting industry, the commercial, political, and diplomatic knowledge, the lucid disposition, the correct and perspicuous expression of Jenkinson; and the acuteness, closeness, and neat precision of Germaine. Dundas,* from his first entrance into public life, exhibited those qualities by which he has been uniformly distinguished; an understanding quick, sagacious, and powerful; reasoning forcible and direct, strictly adhering to the point at issue; an expeditious despatch of difficult business; and, regarding the senate as a council for the direction of national affairs more than a theatre for the display of eloquence, he was in his language intelligible and strong, without ornament or elegance. A mind by nature pene-

* Lord advocate of Scotland.

trating, brilliant, and inventive, formed and refined by erudition and by literary^y society, sharpened and invigorated by professional occupations, and enlarged by political studies and pursuits; an eloquence that he could admirably vary to the occasion, and exhibit either in argumentative force, logical subtlety and skill, or with all the ornaments of rhetoric and the graces of persuasion, rendered Wedderburne a valuable accession to any cause which he chose to support^z. For masculine energy of intellect, force devoid of ornament, and exhibiting itself in efforts direct, simple, and majestic Thurlow stood eminent. Lord North was equally remarkable for pleasing and varied wit and humour, classical taste, erudition, and allusion, as for dexterity of argument and felicity of reply. On the other side were arrayed, the patriotism and solidity of Dempster and Saville; the industry and colonial information of Pownal; the colloquial pleasantry, vivacity, and classical erudition of Wilkes; the animated declamation of Barre; the quick apprehension, commercial and political knowledge, of Johnstone; and the constitutional principles, legal precision, readiness, acuteness, and vigour, of Dunning. Above these, rose the extensive, accurate, and multifarious knowledge, the abundant and diversified imagery, the luminous illustration and rapid invention; the reasoning, dilated or compressed, digressive or direct, disjointed or continuous, which, if not always pointedly convincing, never failed to be generally instructive; the comprehensive views and philosophical eloquence, of a Burke. A senator was now rising to the first rank in the first assembly of the world, who must have held a very exalted situation in any convention of statesmen and orators recorded in history, this was Charles James Fox. In the twentieth year of his age he had become a member of parliament, and young as he was, distinguished himself among the many eminent members of the house, and was at first one of the ablest supporters of administration. The facility with which he made himself master of a new question, and comprehend-

^y He was the intimate friend of Smith, Robertson, and Ferguson, and their contemporaries, in their early years; and cultivated an acquaintance with Burke, Johnson, and other eminent scholars, in his more advanced life.

^z The judicial maxims and character of Wedderburne will appear in the third and the succeeding volume.

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ed with such force of judgment the strength, weakness, and tendency, of a proposition or measure; his powerful argumentation, his readiness of the most appropriate significant, and energetic language, soon rendered him conspicuous; while his daily and obvious improvement showed that his talents had not then nearly reached the pinnacle at which they were destined to arrive. Since he joined opposition, his talents and exertions appeared more potent and formidable than even had been expected.^a

In the house of peers, the chief supporters of administration were, lord Hillsborough, a nobleman of sound judgment and official experience; earl Gower, a peer of good character and extensive influence, who in the minority of the duke, headed the Bedford party; and the earl of Sandwich, acute and intelligent as a senator, but a judicious speaker rather than a splendid orator. The only peer of transcendent genius who joined ministers in the coercive system, was lord Mansfield; a personage very eminently distinguished for abilities and erudition, and for argumentative, refined, and persuasive eloquence; but the fame of this illustrious senator was principally founded upon his oratorical and judicial powers and efforts,^b and derived little accession from his counsels as a statesman. The most distinguished peers who were inimical to the coercive system, were the marquis of Rockingham, whom we have viewed as minister; the duke of Richmond, a nobleman of respectable abilities, active, indefatigable, and ardent; lord Shelburne, whom we have seen as secretary of state, distinguished for extent of general knowledge, and peculiarly marked for his extensive views of the reciprocal relations, commercial and political, of European states; lord Camden, the great bulwark of English law, profoundly versed in our constitution, with that mild, clear, and nervous eloquence, which is the firm and efficacious instrument of wisdom; and lastly, in himself a host, the earl of Chatham.

a A part of this account is taken with considerable variations from the life of Burke, first edition, p. 210 to 218.

b The reader will find a character of this great man in the narrative of the year 1788; for the judicial part of which I am chiefly indebted to a gentleman of high eminence for literary and legal erudition.

SURVEYING and examining the principal actors on the grand political theatre, the reader may perceive that, both for and against ministers, there was a constellation of abilities; but, in opposition, the highest talents, and the most approved wisdom.

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On the 30th of November the new parliament met. His majesty's speech stated to the houses, that a daring spirit of resistance and disobedience to the laws still unhappily prevailed in the province of Massachusetts Bay, and had in divers parts of it broken forth in fresh violences of a criminal nature; but these proceedings had been countenanced and encouraged in others of the colonies, and unwarrantable attempts had been made to obstruct the commerce of this kingdom by unlawful combinations: such measures, however, had been employed, as were judged most effectual for carrying the acts of the preceding session into execution, protecting commerce, and restoring and preserving order and good government in the province of Massachusetts. It expressed his majesty's resolution to withstand every attempt to diminish the authority of parliament over the dominions of the crown; the maintenance of which authority was necessary for the dignity and welfare of the British empire: it stated the satisfaction of the king at the restoration of complete tranquillity to Europe, by the peace between Russia and Turkey; and concluded with recommending firmness and unanimity in parliamentary proceedings. Avowing the taxation of the colonies to be an essential right of the British legislature, and that the late acts must be executed, the speech^e declared, that no regard was to be paid to the opinions and sentiments which had produced a confederation of the colonies, and that ministers were not moved by the proceedings in America to deviate from the plans of the former session. While the speech demonstrated the intentions of government, the address, carried by a great majority (though not without strenuous opposition,) manifested that the new, like the old parliament, was resolved to persist in taxing British subjects without their own consent; establishing in some colonies, systems of polity different

Meeting of
parlia-
ment.
King's
speech.

Address.

^e See State Papers, Nov. 30, 1774.

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from the British constitution; punishing those who had never been tried, and ordaining trials, different in principle and mode from those which are recognized by our laws; it proved also that the new parliament esteemed the representations of the colonists 'undeserving' of regard. The address, indeed, sanctioned the general policy of ministers: and the parliament, at the very commencement of its deliberative proceedings, unequivocally evinced its determination to tread in the steps of the former. The opposition speakers exhorted legislature to INVESTIGATE FACTS BEFORE THEY PROCEEDED TO JUDGMENT; and not to pledge themselves implicitly to follow the example of their predecessors, without fully examining the grounds on which they had acted, and the effects which their acts had produced and were producing. Having moved for a communication of all the intelligence that had been received by his majesty respecting America, and the motion being negatived, they affirmed, that as the ministers and former parliament had passed sentence without taking cognisance of the case, the present parliament was pursuing the same plan. They next proceeded to the consequences, as they had verified or falsified the predictions of ministers; contended, that whereas his majesty's counsellors had prophesied that the proceedings respecting Boston would strike terror into America, they had really combined into one party all the colonists, though before divided and detached; and that, instead of frightening them severally into submission, they had compelled them jointly to resistance. In the house of lords a very strong protest was made, which, after stating the evils of the ministerial system, added the following words: "it affords us a melancholy prospect of the disposition of the lords in the present parliament, *when we see the house, under the pressure of so severe and uniform an experience, again ready, without any inquiry, to countenance, if not to adopt, the spirit of the former fatal proceedings.*"

VIEWING the conduct of ministry as to utility of object and justness of principle, the historical reader may probably have formed some judgment of the character of their policy; he has, in the immediately subsequent acts, a farther opportunity of estimating their qualifications by the means

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which they employed. To coerce America was the determination of ministry and the legislature. If coercion must be used, a stronger force, it was naturally expected, would be demanded, than that which was requisite in times of tranquillity; but when the supplies came under consideration, ministers proposed to diminish, instead of increasing, both sea and land forces; and required seventeen thousand troops, instead of eighteen thousand, and sixteen thousand seamen instead of twenty thousand. On this subject, opposition charged ministry with an intention of deceiving the people to war, while they pretended to expect peace; but that the hostilities, which they deprecated as ruinous in themselves, would be rendered still more fatally destructive by defective preparation: there was (they said) either inadequacy of force to the end proposed, or feeble and paltry artifices to conceal obvious intentions.^d

EVER since the debate on the address, great indecision had appeared in the conduct of the minister. He studiously avoided any farther discussion on American politics, and frequently absented himself from the house. From these circumstances it was conjectured, that he did not fully concur in the coercive system; and this hypothesis was by no means inconsistent with either his known disposition or abilities. It was presumed, that a man of such a conciliating temper, and whose first ministerial act^e had been concession to appease the colonies, could really be no friend to violent and irritating measures; and that a statesman of his undoubted talents could not, from the dictates of his own understanding, devise or recommend such acts. Lord North, it was imagined could not long be so completely deceived as to fact, and erroneous in argument, as the proposers of the ministerial measures appeared. Besides, it was supposed that his intellect was too enlightened, and his mind too liberal, to possess that contemptible obstinacy of character which is incident to men at the same time weak and vain, who adhere to a

Indecision
of minis-
ters.Character
and policy
of lord
North.

^d See the speeches of opposition, in Debrett's Parliamentary Debates in December 1774; especially of Mr. Fox, in a committee of supply.

^e See the account of parliament 1770, vol. i.

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Opinions
of his power
and efficiency.

plan, not because it is proved to be right, but because they had once favoured its adoption.^f

THE theory of an interior cabinet was revived ; and it was asserted, that lord North, though ostensibly minister, was really compelled to obey the dictates of a secret junto. Having, however, no satisfactory evidence that such a cabal existed, nor that an able and estimable nobleman submitted to such a disgraceful mancipation, I cannot record conjecture as a historical truth, and must narrate the measures proposed or adopted by lord North as his own, because for them he declared himself responsible.

UNTIL the Christmas recess, the minister continued to abstain from giving any determinate opinion concerning American affairs. During the adjournment, the North American merchants of London and Bristol, having more deeply considered the consequences resulting to their trade, were seriously alarmed ; as were also the manufacturers of Birmingham, Meetings were called, and petitions to parliament were prepared by these bodies, representing the great losses which they had sustained from the suspension of traffic, the immense sums due from America,

^f It has been very often asserted, and by many believed, that lord North originally was, and always continued in his private sentiments, inimical to the American war ; although he, as prime minister, in every measure of carrying it on, incurred the chief responsibility. This opinion, as an historian, I have not documents either to confirm or refute with undoubted certainty. To those who would confine themselves to comparison of the plans and conduct of government during that awful period, with the talents often displayed by his lordship, the conjecture may appear probable. But persons who take a candid view of the respectable and estimable moral qualities of the prime minister, will hesitate in justifying his wisdom at the expense of his integrity ; they will sooner admit that a man of genius, literature, and political knowledge, reasoned falsely and acted unwisely, than that a man of moral rectitude acted in deliberate and lasting opposition to his conscience, thereby involving his country in misfortune. At the same time, I am fully aware that there is a third hypothesis possible, and by many believed, if not by some known to be true. The opinion in question rather changes the situation than degrades the character of lord North, by representing him as merely his majesty's first commissioner of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, instead of the prime political counsellor. Persons of very considerable respectability, of very high veneration for the character of lord North, and who with inviolable fidelity adhered to him in every vicissitude of fortune, have given their opinion, that he was not really minister, but the official executor of positive commands. I am aware also, that in this assertion they are said to proceed, not merely on general inferences, but on specific evidence. From the nature of the ALLEGED DOCUMENTS, I know well that if they exist, they cannot at present be made public. If the truth of this account were established, we should, indeed, have to consider his lordship as officially obeying orders, but not as voluntarily proposing counsels : this, perhaps, might excuse him as the servant of a master, but would not be sufficient to acquit him as member of a deliberative assembly. Even in this last view, palliations might be found to apologize to the indulgent, though it might be more difficult to discover facts and arguments which would satisfy the rigidly just.

and the ruin that must accrue to them unless intercourse should be speedily reopened with the colonies. They were presented as soon as parliament met ; and also petitions from various other bodies and parts of the kingdom. The West India merchants and planters stated how deeply they were concerned in this dispute, as the sugar islands not only drew a great part of their provisions from America, but were supplied with lumber from thence, for which they bartered their rum and sugars ; so that an interruption of the intercourse between the British American continent and those islands, was likely not only to deprive the latter of the means of sending their produce to Europe, but to cause a great body of people to perish for want of sustenance. The various petitions were referred to a committee of the house ; but from the little attention that was paid to them, it was called *the committee of oblivion*. The petition from the congress to the king had been transmitted to London ; his majesty refused to receive it from a body of which he could not acknowledge the legality, but referred it to parliament. On the 26th of January, sir George Saville presented a petition to the house from three American agents, praying to be heard on the subject of the petition presented by them from the congress to the king, and which his majesty had referred to the house. A hearing was refused by the commons on the same ground, that no attention could be paid to that petition without acknowledging the authority of the meeting.

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Petitions presented from America and American merchants to parliament and the king,

are dismissed without a hearing.

THE opponents of coercion now received a reinforcement of genius, eloquence, and political wisdom, by the appearance of lord Chatham in the house of lords, after an absence of several years. That illustrious statesman, who had carried the prosperity and glory of his country to so exalted a pitch, now left the sick room, that he might try to avert the evils with which it was threatened, from the feeble, fluctuating, and erroneous policy of his successors in administration. Lord Dartmouth, secretary of state for the American department, having laid sundry papers before the house relative to the state of affairs in America, lord Chatham moved an address to the king

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Lord Chatham, though loaded with infirmities, returns to the house.

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His intro-
ductory
speech.

for recalling the troops from Boston. The speech that introduced the motion was replete with that forcible, brilliant, and impressive eloquence, which during forty years had delighted, instructed, and astonished parliament. "The Americans, (said he,) sore under injuries and irritated by wrongs, stript of their inborn rights and dearest privileges, have resisted oppression, and entered into confederacies for preserving their common liberties. Under this idea, the colonists have appointed men competent to so great an undertaking, to consider and advise the most effectual means for maintaining so inestimable a blessing. Invested with this right by the choice of a free people, these delegates have deliberated with prudence, with wisdom, and with spirit; and, in consequence of these deliberations, have addressed the justice and the honour of their country. This is their fault, this is their crime; they have petitioned for that, without which a free people cannot possibly exist. Much has been said of late about the authority of parliament. Its acts are held up as sacred edicts demanding implicit submission, because, if the supreme power does not lodge somewhere operatively and effectively, there must be an end of all legislation. But they who thus argue, or rather dogmatize, do not see the whole of this question on great, wise, and liberal grounds. In every free state, the constitution is fixed, and all legislative power and authority, wheresoever placed, either in collective bodies or individuals, must be derived under that established polity from which they are framed. Therefore, however strong and effective acts of legislation may be when they are formed in the spirit of this constitution, yet when they resist its principles, or counteract its provisions, they attack their own foundation; for it is the constitution, and the constitution only, which limits both sovereignty and allegiance. This doctrine is no temporary doctrine taken upon particular occasions to answer particular purposes, it is involved in no metaphysical doubts and intricacies, but clear, precise, and determinate: it is recorded in all our law books; it is written in the great volume of nature; it is the essential and unalterable right of Englishmen, and accords with

"all the principles of justice and civil policy, which nei-
 "ther armed force on the one side, nor submission on the
 "other, can upon any occasion eradicate. Dreadful will
 "be the effects of coercive measures. Government has
 "sent an armed force of above seventeen thousand men,
 "to dragoon the Bostonians into what is called their
 "duty. Ministers, so far from turning their eyes to the
 "impolicy and dreadful consequences of this scheme, are
 "constantly sending out more troops, and declaring, in the
 "language of menace, that if seventeen thousand men can-
 "not, fifty thousand shall, enforce obedience. So power-
 "ful an army may ravage the country, and waste and des-
 "troy as they march ; but, in the progress of seventeen
 "hundred miles, can they occupy the places that they
 "have passed ? Will not a country which can produce
 "three millions of people, wronged and insulted as they
 "are, start up like hydras in every corner, and gather
 "fresh strength from fresh opposition ?" In this situa-
 "tion and prospect, he proposed that a petition should be
 "presented to his majesty to recal the army from Boston,
 "as the present position of the troops rendered them and
 "the Americans continually liable to events which would
 "prevent the possibility of reestablishing concord. This
 "well timed mark of effection and good will on our side,
 "would remove all jealousy and apprehension on the other,
 "and produce the happiest effects to both. If we consulted
 "either our interest or our dignity, the first advances to
 "peace should come from Britain. "If the ministers, on
 "the contrary persevere in their present measures, I will
 "not (said he) assert that the king is betrayed, but I will
 "pronounce that the kingdom is undone. I have crawled
 "to tell you my opinion ; I think it my duty to give the
 "whole of my experience and counsel to my country at
 "all times, but more particularly when it so much needs
 "political guidance. Having thus entered on the thresh-
 "hold of this business, I will knock at your gates for
 "justice, and never stop, unless infirmities should nail me
 "to my bed, until I have at least employed every means
 "in my power to heal those unhappy divisions. Every

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"motive of equity and of policy, of dignity and of prudence, urges you to allay the ferment in America, by a removal of your troops from Boston, by a repeal of your acts of parliament, and by a demonstration of amicable dispositions toward your colonies. On the other hand, every danger impends to deter you from perseverance in your present ruinous measures. Foreign war hangs over your heads by a slight and brittle thread ; France and Spain are watching your conduct, and waiting for the maturity of your errors." His present motion, lord Chatham said, he had formed for a solid, honourable, and lasting settlement between Britain and America. This first speech of his lordship on the ministerial project of America, dictated by comprehensive wisdom, operating on accurate and extensive political knowledge, made little impression on the majority of the house. The peers who supported administration expressed themselves in high and decisive language, they severely reprobated the conduct of the Americans, and asserted that all conciliatory means had proved ineffectual : it was high time (they said) for the mother country to assert her authority ; concession, in the present case, would defeat its own object : the navigation act, and all other laws that form the great basis on which those advantages rest, and the true interests of both countries depend, would fall a victim to the interested and ambitious views of America. In a word, it was declared that the mother country should never relax till America confessed our supremacy ; and it was avowed to be the ministerial resolution to enforce obedience by arms.

His plan of
conciliation

THE motion was negatived by a great majority ; but lord Chatham, not discouraged by the rejection of his introductory motion, persevered in prosecuting his scheme of conciliation : for which purpose he laid before the house the outlines of a bill, under the title of " A provincial act for settling the troubles in America, and for asserting the supreme legislative authority and superintending power of Great Britain over the colonies." It proposed to repeal all the statutes which had been passed in the former session relative to America ; in which were included the Quebec act, and another law that regulated the quar-

tering of soldiers; also to rescind eight acts of parliament, passed in the present reign from the fourth year to the twelfth. It proposed to restrain the powers of the admiralty and vice-admiralty courts in America, within their ancient limits, and to establish the trial by jury in all such civil cases in which it had been lately abolished; the judges to hold their offices and salaries as in England, *quamdiu se bene gesserint*. It declared the colonies in America to be justly entitled to the privileges, franchises, and immunities granted by their several charters or constitutions; and that such charters ought not to be invaded or resumed, unless for some legal grounds of forfeiture. But while his bill took these steps to satisfy the colonies, it vindicated the supremacy of Great Britain; expressed the dependence of America on the parent country;^b asserted, as an undoubted prerogative, the king's right to send any part of the legal army to whatever station in his dominions he judged expedient for the public good, and condemned a passage in the petition of the general congress which questioned that right; on the other hand it declared, that no military force, however legally raised and kept, can ever be constitutionally employed to violate and destroy the just rights of the people. His lordship, aware of the many and complicated materials of his bill, requested the assistance of the house to digest, and reduce them to the form best suited to the dignity and importance of the subject. He deprecated the effects of party or prejudice, factious spleen, or blind predilection. Though a superficial view might represent this as a bill of concession solely, just and accurate examination would discover

^b The colonies of America, it set forth, have been, are, and of right ought to be, dependent upon the imperial crown of Great Britain, and subordinate to the British parliament; and that the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in parliament assembled, had, have, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the people of the British colonies in America, in all matters touching the general weal of the whole dominions of the imperial crown of Great Britain, and beyond the competency of the local representatives of a distinct colony; and, most especially, an indubitable and indispensable right to make and ordain laws for regulating navigation and trade throughout the complicated system of British commerce; the deep policy of such precedent acts upholding the guardian navy of the whole British empire; and that all subjects in the colonies are bound, in duty and allegiance, duly to recognise and obey (and they are hereby required so to do) the supreme legislative authority and superintending power of the parliament of Great Britain.

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it to be also a bill of assertion. This proposition underwent a great diversity of discussion: the variety and multiplicity of important objects comprised in it were alleged to be much too numerous for being the subject of one act; each of the objects deserved a separate consideration, and ought to be investigated with the most scrutinizing accuracy. The ministerial lords, were indeed extremely violent in opposing the bill; they asserted, that it granted to the Americans whatever they wanted, without securing the rights of the British legislature. The colonists had manifested a rebellious and hostile disposition, and it would be grossly impolitic to make concessions to subjects who had shown a resolution to revolt. In their strictures on the bill, some ministerial lords, without regarding the character, age, and services of its illustrious author, indulged themselves in petulant personalities, which answered no other purpose than to rouse the generous indignation merited by that folly which wantonly provokes superior power. He again predicted, that so violent a system would drive America to a total separation from Great Britain: foreign rivals were regarding the proceedings of the British government with the most vigilant attention, and entertaining sanguine hopes of the reduction of our power, and the dismemberment of our empire, through the incapacity and infatuation of our ministers; though cautiously forbearing interference, until, by perseverance in our ruinous plan, the colonies were completely separated from the mother country. Such were the conclusions and predictions of consummate wisdom; but they were disregarded, and the propositions for terminating the dissensions between Britain and America were rejected by a great majority.

is rejected.

THE house of commons breathed a spirit of coercion no less vehement than that of the house of peers. On the 3d of February, the minister moved an address to the king, declaring Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion, and detailing the acts from which he attempted to justify his assertion: they had been countenanced and encouraged by unlawful combinations in other colonies, to the injury and oppression of many of their innocent fellow-subjects resident within the kingdom of Great Bri-

tain and the rest of his majesty's dominions ; and their conduct was more inexcusable, as the parliament of Britain had conducted itself with such moderation toward the Americans ; but though ready to redress real grievances, dutifully and constitutionally submitted to parliament, they would not relinquish the sovereign authority which the legislature possessed over the colonies. The address besought his majesty to take the most effectual measures to enforce obedience ; and assured him of the fixed resolution of the addressers, at the hazard of their lives and properties, to stand by his majesty, against all rebellious attempts, in the maintenance of his rights and those of the two houses of parliament. This was a very momentous motion, the fate of which, it was foreseen, must in a great measure determine whether there would or would not be a civil war ; for were the provincials declared to be rebels, it was very probable that they would be hurried to actual revolt. The address met with strong opposition ; Mr. Dunning endeavoured to prove, that the Americans were not in rebellion, and supported his assertion by an appeal to legal definitions, which, he contended, did not apply to any of the acts in Massachusetts. The address to the sovereign contained a charge against fellow subjects that was not true, and asked him to prosecute a crime which had not been committed. Mr. Thurlow, the attorney general, affirmed that the Americans were traitors and rebels, but did not prove his position from a comparison of their conduct with the treason laws. Ministerial members endeavoured to show that they were both rebels and cowards ; colonel Grant, in particular, told the house, that he had often acted in the same service with the Americans ; he knew them well, and from that knowledge would venture to predict, that they would never dare to face an English army, as being destitute of every requisite to constitute good soldiers : by their laziness, uncleanness, or radical defect of constitution, they were incapable of going through the service of a campaign, and would melt away with sickness before they could face an enemy ; so that a very slight force would be more than sufficient for their complete reduction. Many ludicrous stories were told of their cowardice, greatly to the entertainment of the minis-

Ministers conceive the conquest of America to be easy,

and the Americans cowards.

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Observations of Mr. Fox on the inspiring effects of liberty.

terial members, who were all confident that America would make a short and feeble resistance. Mr. Fox most eminently distinguished himself, not only by the force of his reasoning and eloquence, but by the depth of his sagacity, which with a prophetic accuracy marked the consequences of the proposed measure. It would create the rebellion, which now, without grounds, was declared to exist. The ministerial inferences respecting the cowardice of the Americans were founded upon false and futile premises, and rested on the reports of officers who had served with them in the war against the French. The provincials had certainly not behaved with that uniform valour which was displayed by the regular troops, but then they considered themselves as auxiliaries, not as principals. The military operations were to promote the success of the British empire ; whereas, if now driven to war, they were to fight, according to their conception, for their own liberty and property, against usurpation and tyranny. Those persons must have attended little to the passions, and the history of human conduct, who concluded, that because men were not always disposed to fight valiantly for others, they therefore would not fight valiantly for themselves. "Peruse (said Mr. Fox) the history of contests for freedom ; you will find that every people inspired with manly virtue enough to value and desire liberty, has always displayed energy and courage in asserting their right to so inestimable a blessing : the Americans will fight when inspired by so powerful a motive." He concluded with moving an amendment, to leave out all but the preliminary words of the address, and to substitute after them the following : "But, deploring that the information which they (the papers laid before the house) had afforded, served only to convince the house that the measures taken by his majesty's servants tended rather to widen than to heal the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America." The arguments and exertions of that extraordinary senator were of little avail ; the proposed address was carried by a great majority, and was equally successful in the house of peers. Eighteen lords entered into a protest against a measure, which they affirmed to amount to a declaration of war : the hos-

Massachusetts Bay declared to be in a state of rebellion.

the manifesto was not, they asserted, justified by evidence; the acts of parliament affecting Massachusetts Bay were real grievances; and those continuing unrepealed, the Americans had no reason to confide in general assurances of redress: we had refused to listen to their petitions; we would receive no information but from one side; we punished without inquiry, and branded with the name of rebels those who remonstrated against such unjust and illegal punishment. The dissentients further objected to the address, that the means of enforcing the authority of the British legislature was confined to persons whose capacity for that purpose was doubtful, and who had hitherto employed no effectual measures for conciliating or reducing the opposers of that authority. This protest, which is in fact a deprecation of the war from which Britain has since suffered so much calamity, concluded with the following words: "Parliament has never refused any of their [the ministers] proposals, and yet our affairs have proceeded daily from bad to worse, until we have been brought, step by step, to that state of confusion, and even civil violence, which was the natural result of such desperate measures. We therefore protest against an address amounting to a *declaration of war*, which is founded on no proper parliamentary information, which was introduced by refusing to suffer the presentation of petitions against it (although it be the undoubted right of the subject to present the same), which followed the rejection of every mode of conciliation, which holds out no substantial offer of redress of grievances, and which promises support to those ministers who have inflamed America, and grossly misconducted the affairs of G. Britain."

In consequence of this address, his majesty sent a message to the house of commons, intimating his resolution, in compliance with the wishes of his parliament to take the most speedy and effectual measures for supporting the just rights of the crown and legislature, and that some augmentation of his forces by sea and land would be necessary for this purpose. Accordingly, an increase both of the army and navy was voted; and reason was given to expect that a greater number would be required in the course of the session.

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Message
from his
majesty re-
quiring an
augmenta-
tion of
forces.

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Opposition insisted, that the ministerial mode of sending small bodies to America was totally inadequate to the purposes of the coercion which they so madly sought; their violent counsels would drive the Americans to revolt, while their feeble and tardy preparations would be ineffectual to the suppression of the disturbances. Ministers, in discussing this as well as other questions, formed their conclusions on a presumption that the Americans were cowards; and continued to express the certainty of reducing all the other colonies to obedience, by merely commencing military operations in Massachusetts Bay. While ministers were proceeding in preparing to compel obedience by means of a military force, they endeavoured to promote the same by other means. With this view it was resolved, until they should become submissive, to withhold from them one of their chief sources of subsistence.

Bill for prohibiting the New England provinces from commerce and fishery.

THE northern provinces had derived essential benefits from the Newfoundland fisheries. In a country not very productive in corn, a great part of the livelihood of the poor was drawn from the ocean; numbers of the inhabitants were fishermen, and had no other means of purchasing flour and other necessities of life, but from the proceeds of that occupation. Their fisheries were, moreover, the means of sustaining a race of seamen; they were allowed to carry their cargoes to any port south of Cape Finisterre, and were accustomed to supply Spain and Portugal with fish during the season of Lent. The minister thought that by debarring them from seeking so material an article of their food where it was most likely to be found, he should at length bring them to that compliance which his other schemes had successively failed to produce. He therefore, on the 10th of February, moved for leave to bring in a bill to restrain the trade and commerce of the provinces of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, the colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island, and Providence Plantation, in North America, to Great Britain, Ireland, and the British islands in the West Indies; and to prohibit such provinces and colonies from carrying on any fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, or other places therein to be mentioned, under certain conditions and for

a limited time. In support of the proposed bill, plausible arguments were adduced: the Americans had refused to trade with this kingdom, it was therefore just that we should not suffer them to trade with any other country; the restraints of the act of navigation were their charter; and the several permissions to deviate from that law, were so many acts of grace and favour, all of which, when they ceased to be merited by the colonies, ought to be revoked by the legislature. The fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, as well as all others in North America, were the undoubted right of Great Britain, and she might accordingly dispose of them as she pleased; as both houses had declared Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion, it was but just and reasonable to deprive it of a benefit which it before enjoyed only by indulgence. The bill, its framer proposed, should be only temporary; and particular persons might be excepted, should they obtain certificates from the governor of their province that their behaviour was loyal and peaceable, or should they subscribe a test acknowledging the supremacy of parliament. It was proper to include the other colonies in the prohibitions imposed upon Massachusetts; New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, bordered on that province; and, unless the privation extended to them the purposes of the act would be defeated: besides, though the people had not broken out in actual violence, they had manifested a disposition to assist the Bostonians. The bill was very strongly opposed: its principle was alleged to involve the innocent with the guilty; to impoverish and starve four provinces, because one was asserted to be in a state of rebellion. Its impugners did not admit the doctrine of its supporters, that the vicinity of one province to another actually in rebellion, is a just reason for including the inhabitants of the tranquil province in the punishment. It was, besides, cruel to deprive poor wretches of their hard-earned livelihood, and the exception of those whom the governor might think proper to favour, would only introduce a scandalous partiality, and pernicious monopoly; but the plan was inexpedient as well as unjust, and would be extremely hurtful to the merchants of Britain. New England owed them a great balance, and had no

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other means of discharging the debt, than through the fishery, and the trade which it circuitously produced; the fisheries would be lost to us, and transferred to our rivals; the inhabitants of the coasts, to prevent themselves from starving, must have recourse to other occupations, and were the provinces driven to war, would become soldiers. Thus we provoked rebellion by one set of unjust acts, and recruited the rebellious army by another. Various petitions were presented by merchants trading to America, stating the evils of the bill even to our own fisheries, as well as to commerce in general. The expostulations, however, produced no effect, and the bill was passed by a great majority in both houses.^k A protest in the house of peers, after detailing the various objections to the principles and provisions of this measure, contains the following very striking remark on the conduct of ministry: "That government which attempts to preserve its authority by destroying the trade of its subjects, and by involving the innocent and the guilty in one common ruin, if it act from a choice of such means, confesses itself unworthy; if from inability to find any other, admits itself wholly incompetent to the end of its institution."

Plan of
lord North
for concili-
ation with
America.

WHILE administration appeared bent on pursuing the most coercive measures, lord North proposed a law, which being professedly conciliatory, astonished not only opposition, but many of the adherents of ministers. The bill, however, was founded on a position implied in the address, "that there was a great want of unanimity in the colonies." On that principle it had been declared, that "whenever any of the colonies shall make a proper application to us, we shall be ready to afford them every just and reasonable indulgence." He therefore proposed, that when any of the colonies should proffer, according to their abilities, to raise their due proportion towards the common defence (the assessment to be raised under the

^k It was on the discussion of this question, Gibbon informs us, that Mr. Fox first manifested to parliament the extraordinary force and extent of his talents. "The principal men, both days, were Fox and Wedderburne, on the opposite sides; the latter displayed his usual talents: the former, taking the vast compass of the question before us, discovered powers for regular debate, which neither his friends hoped, nor his enemies dreaded." See Gibbon's Letter to lord Sheffield, 1776.

authority of the assembly of the province, and to be disposable by parliament,) and when such colony should also engage to provide for the support of its civil government and the administration of justice, parliament should forbear the exaction of duties or taxes, except such as should be necessary for the regulation of trade. It was frequently the fate of lord North's measures, both deliberative and executive, to be proposed too late for answering an end, which they might have attained had they been sooner proposed. It has been already remarked, that during many years there was a great diversity of sentiment in the several colonies concerning principles of government, and other subjects connected with their relation to the mother country; and that it might have been easy for the minister, by attending minutely to their different views and opinions, to have so effectually kept their interests separate, as to prevent any coalition. But the plans which he had lately pursued, had served to unite in one mass materials before discordant: from diversity, government had driven them to uniformity of views. This scheme of compromise might, and probably would, have been received by the middle and southern colonies, from lord North, at the beginning of his administration, and its reception by them, must have compelled the northern republicans at length to accede; but the season was past. The minister, on introducing his motion, made a speech, in which he demonstrated that he considered his present plan as a deviation from the high system of coercion which he had before inculcated. He quoted a variety of instances from the history of this country, of ministers and parliaments altering their opinions in a change of circumstances. The present system, he urged, would be a touchstone to try the sincerity of the Americans; if their opposition was founded on the principles which they pretended, they would comply with the terms; if they should refuse them, they must have been actuated by different motives from those which they professed. "We (said he) shall then be prepared, and know how to act; after having shown our wisdom, our justice, and our humanity, by giving them an opportunity of redeeming their past faults, and holding out to them fitting terms of accommodation, if

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Appre-
hended by
one party
to concede
too much ;

"they reject them, we shall be justified in taking the most coercive measures, and they must be answerable to God and man for the consequences." This measure appeared a concession to the colonies, and met with its first opposition from gentlemen who usually supported government. It was by some ministerial members opposed, as contrary to the principles both of the late address and other acts of government. These objections were pressed with the greatest ardour by Mr. Dundas, and also the partisans of the Bedford interest ; the former, in whatever he undertook, preferred firmness and decision, and disliked the present plan as wavering and indecisive ; the latter, who had uniformly been the abettors of coercion, reprobated every indication of a conciliatory spirit. The disapprobation of persons on whose coincidence he had relied, embarrassed and distressed the minister, and he repeatedly endeavoured to explain himself, but without giving satisfaction. At length, sir Gilbert Elliot professed to reconcile the apparent deviation, and for that purpose observed, that the address contained two correspondent¹ lines of conduct ; on the one hand, to repress rebellion, protect loyalty, and enforce the laws ; on the other, to grant indulgence to colonists who should return to their duty. For the first of these purposes, the forces had been augmented, and the prohibitory system adopted ; for the last, the present plan was proposed, and without it the restrictory act would have been defective and unjust. By this proposition, parliament would not lose the right of imposing taxes ; that was a power which it expressly reserved, neither did it suspend its exercise ; it manifested the firm resolution of the legislature to compel America to provide what we (not they) thought just and reasonable for the support of the empire. Their compliance was

¹ This refined distinction did not prevent discerning supporters of lord North's administration from regarding such very opposite measures in the true light, as the reader may observe in the following extract from Gibbon, written upon this occasion "We go on with regard to America, if we can be said to go on ; for last Monday a conciliatory motion of allowing the colonies to tax themselves, was introduced by lord North, in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine. We went into the house in confusion, every moment expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion against those measures. Lord North rose six times to appease the storm, but all in vain ; till at length sir Gilbert declared for administration, and the troops all rallied under their proper standard." Gibbon's Letter to lord Sheffield, Feb. 25th, 1773.

by another
too little.

Mr. Fox
opposes its
inconsis-
tency.

the only ground of their hope to be reconciled to this country. REVENUE WAS THE SUBJECT OF DISPUTE: if the Americans offered a satisfactory contribution, their past offences would be pardoned, and if they did not, we should compel them to do us justice. Members who had disliked this motion, under the idea that it was not coercive, now became more favourable. The opponents of ministry contended, that the measure was invidious: "It carries (said they) two faces on its very first appearance; to the Americans, and to those who are unwilling to proceed in the extremes of violence against them, the minister holds out negotiation and amity: to those who have joined him, on condition (said Mr. Fox^m) that he will support the supremacy of this country, the proposition holds out a determination to persevere in pursuit of that object. But his friends see that he is relaxing, and the committee sees that they are all ready to withdraw from under his standard. No one in this country, who is sincerely the advocate of peace, will trust the speciousness of his expressions, and the Americans will reject them with disdain. This proposition, so far from tending to disunite, would unite the Americans more closely; they would guard against artifice, as well as defend themselves against force. The minister is contradictory to himself in his professions of conciliation, and very short sighted in conceiving that they would impose on the Americans."

THE plan was evidently only a change of the mode, not a renunciation of the right, of levying taxes; it was a half measure, an attempt to compromise the difference, when it was plain, from the very beginning, that there was no medium between coercion and abandonment. If the ministry were before right, they conceded by far too much, if wrong by far too little. Lord North was too anxious to please one party, without much displeasing the other; there was a fluctuation of counsels, a mixture of soothing and irritating measures, which reciprocally defeated the effect of each other. With abilities that fitted him for being a leader, from want of firmness he was too often a follower of men who were

m See Parliamentary Debates, February 20th, 1775.

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Policy of
lord North
wavering
and irreso-
lute.

Conciliato-
ry plan of
Mr. Burke
on the
ground of
expedi-
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much inferior to himself. While this bill was the subject of discussion, he displayed more dexterity in retreating; than boldness in maintaining his post. His conciliatory plan having undergone such modifications as made a considerable change in its principle and tendency, passed the house by a majority not altogether so great as those which had voted for other propositions of ministers.

MR. BURKE, having devoted a great part of his time and attention to inquiries into the state of America, and having concluded that an attempt to subjugate the colonists would be impracticable, persisted in recommending conciliation. On the 28th of March 1775, he proposed to the house a plan for the reestablishment of concord. He forbore entering into the question of right, but confined himself to the consideration of expediency; and proceeded upon a principle admitted by the wisest legislators, that government must be adapted to the nature and situation of the people for whose benefit it is exercised. He therefore investigated the circumstances, modes of thinking, dispositions, and principles of action, of those men in particular, the treatment of whom was the object of deliberation. To ascertain the propriety of concession, he examined and explained the internal and external state, with the natural and accidental circumstances of the colonies. He considered them with respect to situation, resources, extent, numbers, amazing growth of population, rapid increase of commerce, fisheries, and agriculture; from which he evinced their strength and importance. He then inquired into that unconquerable spirit of freedom by which the Americans are distinguished. This violent passion for liberty, he traced from the sources of descent, education, manners, religious principles, and forms of government. He described the prosperity of America, so rapidly increased in the course of the century, and deduced from its advances, on the one hand, the benefits which had accrued, and would accrue in a still greater degree to this country, if our ancient amity were restored; on the other, their power of resistance, if we should persevere in our determination to employ force. The American spirit of liberty (he said) so predominating from a variety of causes, must be treated in one of three ways. It must either be changed, as incon-

venient, prosecuted, as criminal; or complied with, as necessary. One means of changing the spirit was, by taking measures to stop that spreading population, so alarming to the country; but attempts of this sort would be totally impracticable, and even if they were not, would diminish the benefit which rendered the colonies valuable to the mother country. To empowerish the colonies in general, and especially to arrest the noble course of their marine enterprises, was a project that might be compassed; but we had colonies for no other purpose than to be serviceable to us; it seemed therefore preposterous to render them unserviceable, in order to keep them obedient. The second mode of breaking the stubborn spirit of the Americans, by prosecuting it as criminal, was impossible in the execution, and consequently absurd in the attempt. Perseverance in the endeavour to subjugate a numerous and powerful people, fighting for what they conceived to be their liberty, would diminish our trade, exhaust our resources, and impair our strength, without making any effectual impression upon America. From the contest with the colonies, there would also ensue a rupture with European powers, and a general war. After endeavouring to demonstrate the policy of concession, he proceeded to the principle on which he proposed that the concession should be made. His propositions (he said) were founded on the ancient constitutional policy of this kingdom respecting representation; they merely followed the guidance of experience. In the cases of Wales, the county palatine, Chester, and Durham, their utility to this country was coeval with their admission to a participation of the British constitution: our constitutional treatment of America had caused the benefits which we had derived from that country. Before 1763, we had walked with security, advantage, and honour; since that time, discontent and trouble had prevailed. "I do not (said he) examine the abstract question of right; I do not inquire whether you have a right to render your people miserable; but, whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me, I may do; but what humanity, reason, and justice, tell me, that I ought to do. By your old mode of treating the colonies, they were well affected

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"to you, and you derived from them immense and rapidly increasing advantage; by your new mode, they are ill affected to you, and you have obstructed and prevented the emolument. I recommend to you to return from the measures by which you now lose, to those by which you formerly gained." From these arguments Mr. Burke formed his pacific proposition: "that the Americans should tax themselves by their own representatives, in their own assemblies, agreeable to the former usage, and to the analogy of the British constitution and that all acts imposing duties should be repealed. Though a speech more replete with wisdom was, perhaps, never spoken in that or any other assembly, yet wisdom was unavailing, and the conciliatory plan was rejected by men determined on compulsory measures.

MR. HARTLEY soon after proposed a scheme of reconciliation, intended as a medium between the systems of lord North and Mr. Burke. His plan was, that, at the desire of parliament, the secretary of state should require the several colonies to contribute to the general expense of the empire, but leave the amount and application to the contributors themselves. Thus, on the one

n He moved thirteen resolutions; of which the six first contained his general principles and plan: 1st, He moved, That the colonies and plantations of Great Britain in North America, consisting of fourteen separate governments, and containing two millions and upwards of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending any knights and burgesses, or others, to represent them in the high court of parliament. 2dly, That the said colonies and plantations had been made liable to, and bounded by, several subsidies, payments, rates, and taxes, given and granted by parliament, though the said colonies and plantations have not their knights and burgesses in the said high court of parliament of their own election, to represent the condition of their country; by lack whereof, they had been touched and grieved by subsidies given, granted, and assented to in the said court, in a manner prejudicial to the commonwealth, quietness, rest, and peace, of the subjects inhabiting within the same. 3dly, That from the distance of the said colonies, and from other circumstances, no method had hitherto been devised for procuring a representation in parliament for the said colonies. 4thly, That each of the said colonies hath within itself a body chosen, in part or in whole, by the freemen, freeholders, or other free inhabitants thereof, commonly called the general assembly, or general court, with powers legally to raise, levy, and assess, according to the several usages of such colonies, duties and taxes towards defraying all sorts of public services. 5thly, That the said general assemblies, general courts, or other bodies legally qualified as aforesaid, have at sundry times freely granted several large subsidies and public aids for his majesty's service, according to their abilities, when required thereto by letter from one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state; and that their right to grant the same, and their cheerfulness and sufficiency in the said grants, have been at sundry times acknowledged by parliament. 6thly, That it hath been found by experience, that the manner of granting the said supplies and aids by the said general assemblies, hath been more agreeable to the inhabitants of the said colonies, and more beneficial and conducive to the public service, than the mode of giving and granting aids and subsidies in parliament, to be raised and paid in the said colonies.

hand, requisition of revenue would originate with parliament; on the other, colonists would not be taxed without their own consent. The arguments so often repeated in favour of conciliation and of coercion, were employed by opposition and ministry; and, as before, reason was overborn by numbers.

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THE minister now introduced a second restraining bill, for extending the prohibitions of the first to all the remaining colonies, except New York; which after undergoing a similar discussion as the other, was passed into a law. Various petitions were presented to his majesty, praying for the adoption of new measures respecting America; but of these, the most remarkable was the petition of the city of London, presented to the king by the hands of Mr. Wilkes the lord mayor. In the usual style of the addresses of the city for several years, this paper was rather a remonstrance than a petition: it justified the resistance of America, as founded upon constitutional principles; asserted that the colonies were driven to it by the corruption and tyranny of the British government; that the conduct of Britain towards America was totally opposite to the principles which had produced the revolution, and the accession of the house of Brunswick; and that it would be fatal to the commerce, prosperity, peace, and welfare of this country. His majesty expressed particular resentment at both the matter and the manner of this expostulation. A petition was about the same time presented to the house of peers from the British inhabitants of the province of Quebec, praying the favourable interposition of their lordships, as the hereditary guardians of the rights of the people, that the act might be repealed or amended, and that the petitioners might enjoy their constitutional rights, privileges, and franchises. Lord Camden moved a repeal of the act, on the same grounds that it had been opposed in the former year; but the motion was negatived: and a similar petition presented to the house of commons, met with a similar fate.

Bill for extending commercial prohibitions to the middle and southern colonies.

THE province of New York was very opposite in habits and sentiments to its neighbours of New England: as distinguished for love of gaiety and pleasure, as the New Englanders were for austerity and puritanical zeal;

Loyalty of the province of New York.

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Representa-
tion to
the com-
mons,is dismissed
unheard.

Supplies.

and as much attached to monarchy, as the others were devoted to republicanism. They had been uniformly more moderate than any of either the middle or southern colonies; in their provincial assembly, they refused to acknowledge the congress, and declared their resolution of continuing united to Great Britain: they did not, however, profess unconstitutional submission, but stated the grounds on which they were willing to continue in allegiance. In their statement, they included various grievances; drew up a representation of their sentiments and wishes, comprehending an entreaty for the redress of the evils which they alleged to exist, and transmitted it to their agent Mr. Burke, desiring him to present it to the house of commons. In introducing this paper to the house, Mr. Burke expatiated on the favourable disposition of the province of New York. In the midst of all the violence which overspread the continent, that colony had preserved her legislature and government entire; and when every thing elsewhere was tending to a civil war, she dutifully submitted her complaints to the justice and clemency of the mother country. Their direct application to the house afforded a fair opportunity for terminating differences. New York was a central province, which could break the communication between the northern and southern colonies; and, by having that country in our favour, we might be able to coerce the rest. He proposed, therefore, that the remonstrance should be read. Ministers contended, that the form of the address rendered its admission inconsistent with the honour and dignity of the British parliament; for it avoided the name of a petition, lest it should imply obedience to the legislature: the representation was therefore dismissed unheard.

PARLIAMENT this session came to a resolution of settling Buckingham house on the queen, instead of Somerset house, and vesting the latter building in his majesty for the purpose of erecting certain public offices. The last business which occupied the session of 1775 was finance. The amount of the supplies for the year was 4,307,450*l.* and a million of three per cent. annuities was paid off at 88 per cent.; 1,205,000*l.* exchequer bills were discharged, and new ones to an equal amount issued. When the

money bills received the royal assent, the speaker addressed his majesty, averting to the heaviness of the grants, which nothing but the particular exigencies of the times could justify in a season of peace : but assuring the king, that if the Americans persisted in their resistance, the commons will use every effort to maintain and support the supremacy of the legislature. On the 26th of May, his majesty closed the session with his speech, in which he expressed the greatest satisfaction with their conduct. He declared his conviction, that the conciliatory propositions would have the desired effect in bringing back the Americans to a sense of their duty ; he informed parliament, that he had received satisfactory assurances from the neighbouring powers, of their amicable dispositions ; and particularly thanked the houses for the mark of their attachment lately shown to the queen. Thus closed a session of parliament, in which, notwithstanding the ablest efforts to effect conciliation, a great majority, bent upon coercion, adopted such measures as rendered a war unavoidable between Britain and her colonies.

WHILE the American contest occupied the chief attention of parliament, it was also the principal subject of political literature. Three systems of conduct were proposed by writers on our disputes with the colonies : conciliation supported by many able authors, at the head of whom was Mr. Burke ; coercion, supported by a great number of writers, with a smaller aggregate of ability, at the head of whom was a man of no less eminent talents, doctor Samuel Johnson ; the third system was that of Dean Tucker, who proposed entirely to relinquish America, in which that gentleman stood alone. His scheme was ridiculed at the time by both parties ; but it now appears that even a total separation would have been more fortunate for us without hostilities, than a plan of coercion, which, after a long and expensive war, was to end with that separation : the event has justified the anticipation of Dean Tucker's sagacity. The productions of Mr. Burke on these subjects exhibit to the historical reader a clear and complete view of what had been our policy towards America, and what had been the consequences : what then was our policy, and what then were the actual

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and probable consequences. They also present to the political philosopher, perspicuous and forcible reasoning upon the system which government had adopted. Doctor Johnson's essay, manifestly as it demonstrated the metaphysical ingenuity of its author, afforded little light on the merits of the question. It is a chain of reasoning upon an assumption: the first position asserts as an axiom, the very principle to be proved, the supremacy of parliament; it attempts to dazzle the understanding, by representing analogies between subjects totally dissimilar.^o In politics, indeed, its author adhered too much to generalities to be practically beneficial; and with the most powerful mind, habituated to abstraction, he on the question of taxation reasoned rather as an acute schoolman, than as an able statesman. He did not enter into that particular consideration of the actual cases, which he employed with such powerful and happy effect in his critical and moral writings. While Mr. Burke and other authors supported the cause of the Americans on constitutional principles, and the wisdom of doctor Johnson could not prevent his peculiar prejudices from operating in impugning the claims of the Americans on very high tory principles; literary advocates arose in their favour, who fell into the opposite extreme. Doctors Priestley and Price, dissenting ministers of every great ability and eminence, refining on the speculations of the illustrious Locke, formed theories of civil and religious liberty totally incapable of being re-

Some of the last support the colonies on constitutional grounds;

others on assumptions inimical to established government.

^o In order to ridicule the resistance of America, Johnson supposes Cornwall to resolve to separate itself from the rest of England, and to refuse to submit to an English parliament: holding a congress at Truro, and publishing resolutions similar to those of the Americans. "Would not (he says) such a declaration appear to proceed from insanity?"—The cases are not analogous: Cornwall is fully represented in parliament; consequently, could not have the same reason for resisting our legislature: but if we were to suppose parliament absurd and wicked enough to make laws depriving Cornwall, without any demerit, of the most valuable privileges of Britons, the Cornishmen would have a right to resist that act, because oppressive, unconstitutional, and unjust. As to the expediency of exerting the right of resistance, the case would be very different between Cornwall and America; Cornwall being both much weaker and much nearer than the colonies. It is difficult to conceive that the wisdom of Johnson could have intended the exhibition of this fanciful analogy to impress reasoning men. In the whole of the work, however, he shows, that he considered the subjugation of America, if it persevered in resistance, as certain. With many estimable and admirable qualities, by no means as a MAN entertaining a just value for freedom, he did not as a PHILOSOPHER ascribe to it its real effects; he did not reflect on the energetic spirit which inspires men fighting for what either is, or they think to be, their liberties.

duced to practice in any society of human beings, as far as experience ascertains to us the qualities and capacities of man ; and tending, by holding up fanciful models of polity, to render the votaries of these writers dissatisfied with the existing establishments. Thus the opposition to the plans respecting America, though hitherto defensible on constitutional grounds, gave rise to discussions productive of visionary and dangerous doctrines, which eventually promoted very unconstitutional conduct.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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HM.



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Mason.

